



Winter 2021

Volume 29, Number 4



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I Was Wrong All These Years, For the Right Reason

Early Fireman's Button Discovered in New Jersey

Announcements , Classified Ads, Sponsor Ads, Reciprocal Club Ads

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The C4 Newsletter

Volume 29, Number 4

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Membership questions, address changes, and dues should be sent to Charlie Rohrer at P.O. Box 25, Mountville, PA 17554. Dues are \$30 regular (including 1st class mailing of the Newsletter *within the U.S.*) and \$40 (for 1st class mailing outside the U.S.); \$10 for junior members (under 18 residing in the U.S.) and \$15 (under 19 residing outside the U.S.)



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ACTING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, DECEMBER 2021

(Christopher R. McDowell, National Vice-President C4)

As most of you know, our C4 President Craig McDonald is ill and I am fulfilling the role of C4 President until at least May 2022 so Craig can focus on his health, which gratefully seems to be improving weekly. We wish Craig a full recovery and hope to see him back at the helm soon. In the meantime, the Board of Directors is pushing forward with many exciting plans to grow, expand, and improve the Club in the year ahead.

I have every reason to believe that 2022 will be the best year yet for colonial numismatics. New discoveries and research are ongoing. We are slowly starting to unravel many of the mysteries surrounding the origins of the coins, token, medals, and jetons we collect. Future generations will look back on this as the Golden Age of colonial numismatics and lament that they could not be part of it. Don't miss out, stay engaged, we are doing great things.

This is the last issue of the *C4 Newsletter* printed in the current format. The *C4 Newsletter* will have many enhanced features starting with the next issue. Those of you who attended this year's convention in Baltimore were able to examine samples of the new *C4 Newsletter*. I will not detail all the changes here, but highlights include glossy pages, full color, and binding! Everyone who saw the samples agreed that the new format is a significant improvement over the current product. Moreover, the cost of publishing will decrease. This means there will be no dues increase in 2022!

We will also be focusing on improvements to the C4 website in 2022. I am displeased with the current appearance and content of the website. Our website should be the first place our members go to see new and exciting colonial numismatic content and news, not an afterthought. Please check the website over the next six months to watch the growth. The educational seminars from our 2021 Baltimore convention will be posted on our website. If you could not attend the 2021 convention, you can watch the seminars on the website. Please be aware that we intend to live-stream our convention workshops from now on. If you want to watch the seminars live, all you will need to do is go to the C4 website and find the schedule of events and links. In these days of the dreadful pandemic, the Board of Directors realizes that not every member can risk travel. We hope to accommodate these members and others by permitting a virtual presence at many of our key convention events in the years to come.

What else do we have to look forward to in 2022? It is bittersweet news that I deliver now. Our dear friend and former *C4 Newsletter* editor Syd Martin's books and coins will be sold starting in 2022. The news is bittersweet because these sales are only made possible by his passing. I am sure I speak for everyone when I say that I would much rather have Syd around to laugh and talk with than any coin or book in his collection. Syd was a giant in the area of colonial numismatics, and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him. But, as they say, life must go on. I am thrilled to announce that C4's partner Stack's Bowers has obtained Syd's entire numismatic collection of colonial coins and medals for consignment. By the time you read these words, most of you will have heard the news. I have much confidence that the experts at Stack's Bowers will do great justice to Syd's collection, which I understand will be auctioned over the course of several sales, similar to John J. Ford Jr.'s collection. As we all know, Syd was a top-notch collector and

researcher. Many colonial numismatic gems will exchange hands in 2022, some for the first time at public sale. I wish to congratulate Stack's Bowers for obtaining this significant consignment, and I look forward to attending the sales and seeing many of you there. Concurrent with the sale of Syd's coins by Stack's Bowers, David Fanning will be auctioning Syd's books through his company Kolbe & Fanning. The book sale will take place in or about May of 2022. David Fanning is a longtime member of our Club, and his company, Kolbe & Fanning, is also a partner with C4 in the distribution of our books along with Charlie Davis. I encourage our members to seek out the Kolbe & Fanning website in the coming months, so no one misses this important book auction.

Speaking of books—your Club had a banner year for book sales in 2021. Both Randy Clark's Connecticut book and our Machin's Mills book sold out! The sales of these books help fulfill the Club's core mission of spreading the gospel of colonial numismatics. A few aftermarket books may still be available through Kolbe & Fanning or Charlie Davis, but they are few, and the Club and authors have already been paid for them. If you do not have copies, I would suggest you act quickly.

Going into 2022, C4 remains strong financially. The changes to the *C4 Newsletter*, while a great improvement aesthetically and functionally, is projected to save us money in the long term. As just noted, our revenue from books was positive in 2022 as well. The purpose of this Club, however, is not to make money but to fulfill our core non-profit mission as it relates to educating the public and our members of the joys of colonial numismatics. In the coming year, I hope that the changes to our website, *C4 Newsletter*, live-streaming of events, and convention will help us better fulfill this mission. You can help save the Club money by providing us with your email address and renewing your dues now. Postage is a major part of the Club's budget. As we upgrade our website, many features may only be visible to members and access will be granted and confirmed through your email address. **Please make sure the Club has your up-to-date email address so we may communicate with you efficiently and effectively, and so that you may enjoy all the benefits you are entitled to as a member.**

We lost too many friends in 2021. May God keep all of you safe in 2022. I look forward to seeing and interacting with you all.



MINUTES OF C4 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

November 20, 2021

1. National Vice-President Chris McDowell opened the meeting by announcing that President Craig McDonald has been ill and has agreed to hand over the powers of the presidency for a six-month period to Chris McDowell, pursuant to the C4 By-laws. This period will last until May 1, 2022, at which time the Board and Craig will review Craig's status. Chris McDowell will exercise all powers of the presidency until that date, and Craig McDonald retains the title of President.
2. The loss of two prominent C4 members since the prior C4 Convention, Syd Martin and Clem Schettino, were acknowledged. We held a moment of silence in their memories.
3. Former President Jim Rosen announced that this year's Q. David Bowers Award for excellence in numismatics is being awarded to David McCarthy and Eric Goldstein, for their work on the topic of Continental Currency pieces. David and Eric spoke briefly as they accepted their awards, with David calling it "an incredible honor."
4. As is our tradition, each person present introduced themselves and stated where they were from and their areas of collecting interest.
5. Chris McDowell discussed our relationship with Stacks-Bowers. He noted that it is a great partnership, with S-B doing a lot behind the scenes that benefits C4. He reminded us to consider consigning our coins with S-B, which under C4's contract with S-B result in revenues to C4. Chris noted that he has been speaking with S-B, and it is possible that live C4 auctions may take place again in the future.
6. Dale Isaac has been appointed as official C4 Photographer. His excellent photography at successive C4 conventions was recognized.
7. Chris McDowell announced that the Board is looking to take steps to improve our website, by adding content and ensuring that it is up to date. Mike Wierzba will be in charge of efforts to improve the website. If you have content that you believe should be added to the website, please contact Mike.
8. The Board has voted to award Gary Trudgen an Honorary Life Membership, recognizing his years of extraordinary contributions to C4 and to colonial numismatics.
9. Treasurer Charlie Rohrer gave a report of C4's budget, noting that C4 currently has a balance of \$117,316.29. He noted that our assets will end up higher than they have been in a number of years, due to the successful Machin's Mills and Connecticut books. Members asked that the balance sheet be printed in the Newsletter each year going forward.
10. Chris McDowell reported on the C4 Newsletter. He stated that expenses have associated with it have gone up in recent years, and announced that as a result, the Board has authorized a change in printers which could save the club as much as \$6,000 per year. The new printer is able to bind the Newsletter, which is in line with the sentiment of most or all C4 members.

11. Chris McDowell reported that the Club enjoyed a very successful year with its publication of the Machin's Mills and Connecticut books, both of which were financially successful, as well as great additions to colonial numismatic literature. Both books are technically considered sold out, although a few copies may still be found for sale. It was noted that there is the possibility of a second printing in a few years. In addition, Chris announced the adoption of guidelines for the Publications Committee. Chris announced that the Board has appointed the following persons to four-year terms on the Publications Committee: David Menchell (Chair), Chris McDowell, Julia Casey, Jim Rosen, Jim Glickman, Jack Howes, Will Nipper, Charlie Rohrer, and Dennis Wierzba, and with Charlie Davis and David Fanning as non-voting members.
12. We lived-streamed this year's Eric Newman Lectures, and they will be put on the website. It was noted that Lianna Spurrier has provided C4 with an excellent level of services again this year.
13. Chris McDowell expressed C4's thanks and appreciation for those that gave of their time and talents to help make this another successful C4 Convention, recognizing Ray Williams, Jim Rosen, and Charlie Rohrer.
14. Jim Rosen raised the idea of having a "midnight sale" on Friday night of the convention if S-B does not have a live auction at that time, and it does not conflict with C4's contract with S-B. This sale may include donated lots. A midnight sale is possible, and if we have it, Jim would assist with it.
15. Librarian Leo Shane gave a report on the C4 Library. He reminded members that they can borrow items from the Library, and that they should contact him with any requests. Leo also reported that C4 has been offered books from the Eric Newman Library. Leo will visit the Eric Newman Library in St. Louis in during the next ANA Convention and will take colonial-related books and catalogs at that time. In this regard, Leo also asked for help in loading books in St Louis from someone going to ANA. Leo also stated that he is running out of storage space in his house and is looking for a volunteer to house a portion of the library's contents.
16. Awards were given to the two presenters of C4's public presentations at this year's C4 Convention: Ray Williams for his presentation on "Collecting Colonial Currency," and Jim Glickman for "Collecting American Colonials 101."
17. The members present voted unanimously to adopt the meeting minutes from last year's C4 Annual Membership Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Glickman (acting for Secretary Jay Knipe)



C4 2021 REVENUE / EXPENSES

(Charlie Rohrer, C4 Treasurer)

REVENUE	Dues	12,532.43
	CD Interest	2,397.88
	Savings Interest	0.45
	Book Authors' Expense Split	9,591.14
	Book Sales	28,018.86
	Newsletter Ads	6,400.00
	Stack's-Bowers Convention Contribution	6,625.00
	C4 Convention Dinner	1,090.00
	Convention C4 Dealer Tables	2,200.00
	Miscellaneous	593.80
	<u>TOTAL REVENUE</u>	<u>69,449.56</u>

EXPENSES	C4 Newsletter	23,194.50
	Book Authors' Revenue Split	12,642.50
	Book Expenses	12,835.05
	C4 Convention	12,397.21
	Tax Preparation	625.00
	CD early withdrawal penalty	238.33
	Website	2,086.40
	Miscellaneous	1,422.27
	<u>TOTAL EXPENSES</u>	<u>65,441.26</u>

ASSETS	Checking Account	37,273.30
	Savings Account	2,082.90
	CD's	82,695.90
	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>122,052.10</u>

MEMBERS	TOTAL	397
	LIFE (included above)	57

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## **2021 C4 CONVENTION REPORT**

(Ray Williams)

From the colonialcoins online chat group November 22, 2021

I'm surprised there haven't been any posts about the convention yet. Hopefully others will join in... I arrived about 10:00 with my travelling companions Bill Liatys and Mike Brooks. We unloaded our luggage, C4 table stuff and A/V equipment and entered the convention. After many years of doing this, the process was second nature. The C4 Tablecloth, C4 Banner and electrical for the tables were placed in short order. Bill and Mike set up their exhibit shortly after. It was very well received. Dave Menchell exhibited again for his 26th consecutive convention. Dave's exhibits look so professional and could win ANA awards! Attendance for the convention seemed lighter than in past years, but not by much. C4 attendance seemed only slightly down, with the absence of some of our departed members and several who couldn't attend. But there were new faces attending and several new members recruited.

At 4:00 in the afternoon, I met with Lianna Spurrier in the Harborview Room to set up for the Thursday evening events. We combined our technologies and equipment in an experiment to live-stream online, record and still have speakers (remote and in person) projected on the screen for all to see/hear in person. Well... the experiment went very well without a hitch. Thanks to Dennis Wierzba's hard work, we had the usual buffet food and drink. Our speakers were Dennis Tucker, Jack Howes and Randy Clark. A fun evening for all. A big shoutout to Stack's Bowers who invited C4 members for a social right before this evening's events. I couldn't attend because of all the A/V work, but I heard it was wonderful.

Friday started with an ANS sponsored breakfast in room 309 in the convention center. C4 members were invited. During the breakfast, Jesse Kraft gave an interesting presentation about 2 Cent coins. C4 was happy to assist with the use of its projector and cables. Then off to room 304 to set up the A/V equipment & screen for Jim Glickman's presentation. Again, I met with Lianna to set up our technologies. This time, it was just recorded and not livestreamed. All of the C4 speakers will be posted on the C4 website in a few weeks. Jim did well with his "Colonials 101" presentation. After breaking down, it was back to the C4 area where I spent some time with C4 friends and greeting the public. Even if passers-by didn't have an interest in colonials, they certainly enjoyed our candy! Around 5:00, it was a chicken sandwich in the convention lobby and back to the room to nap for a couple hours before the evening's Symposiums.

Friday evening's events were in the Camden Room of the Sheraton, four large round tables were set up, one in each corner: one for NJ collector, one for CT collectors, another for Machin's mills and the fourth for Counterfeit Coppers. Each group did its own thing. I sat with the NJ Group which consisted of Dennis Wierzba, Mike Demling, Dan Knight, Matt Virga, Len Massa, Jeff Lipski, Frank Jozapaitis, Dale Isaac, Mike Brooks, Bill Liatys and Gordon Wrubel (arriving a little late). Pizza was served and Clem Schettino's wife provided a bottle of Crown Royal for everyone to toast Clem's memory. Her toast was a bit emotional for all of us.

Saturday started with breakfast in the hotel with Bill & Mike, then checking out of the hotel and off to room 304 of the convention center for the annual C4 membership meeting (open to the public too). Chris McDowell announced that he would be acting C4 President for 6 months as President Craig McDonald has temporary personal issues preventing him from serving. Chris chaired the meeting and discussed C4 business. Of significant note is the change of C4 printers and a change of format to a bound issue. The samples looked very nice. The meeting was followed by an awesome presentation by Ray Williams "An Introduction to Collecting Colonial Paper." I've talked on this topic before but this had changes and some new info, geared more toward the beginner but hopefully of interest to seasoned collectors too. Lianna was there again to record and the talk will be posted on the C4 website. After tearing down the A/V equipment, I wished Lianna farewell and off to the bourse floor. Monitoring the table for a couple hours, I was able to greet and say goodbye. About 1:30, foot traffic slowed down tremendously and we started removing the exhibits, banner, lights, tablecloth and electrical. After goodbyes to those in the C4 Table area, we left the bourse to load the car and head back to NJ. I arrived in my recliner a little before 5:00.

Good Memories. I hope others will post their experiences

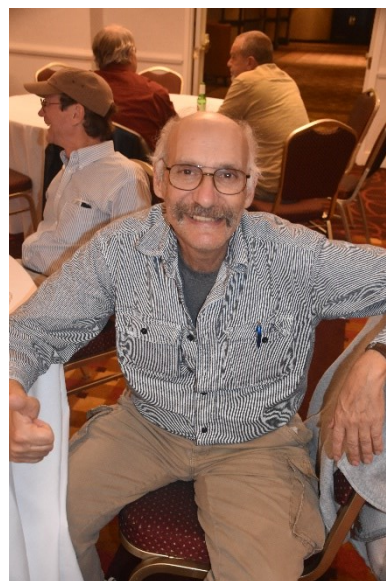
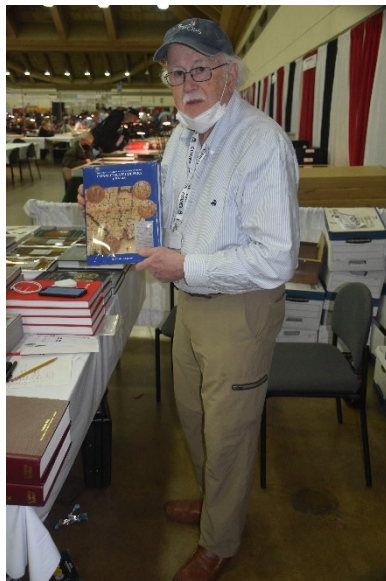
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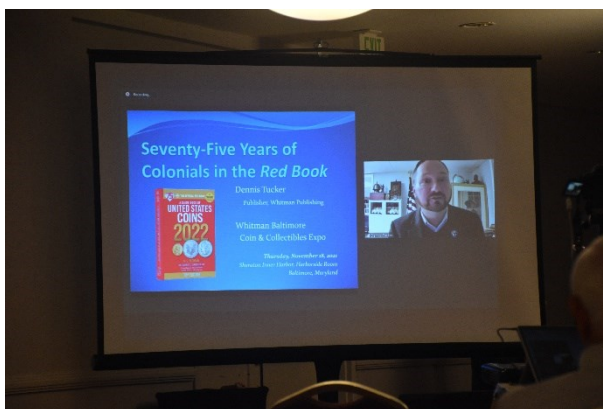


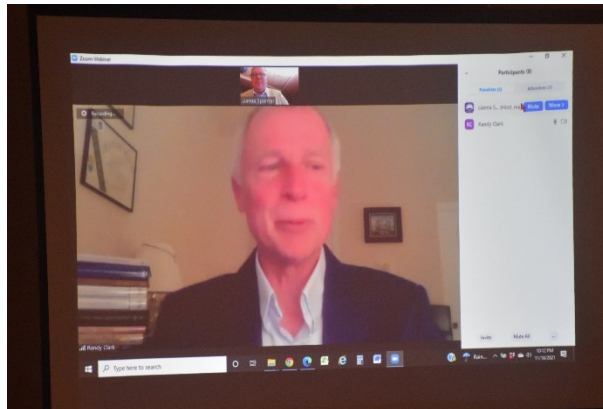
(Left) Lianna Spurrier setting up the technology for remote presentation. (Ray Williams photo.)  
(Right) Ray Williams being awarded for his presentation, "An Introduction to Collecting Colonial Paper" by acting President, Chris McDowell. (Dale Isaac photo.)

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## SELECTED 2021 C4 CONVENTION PHOTOS BY C4 PHOTOGRAPHER, DALE ISAAC







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## NEW CONNECTICUT COPPER VARIETY 1787 MILLER 33.13-Z.18

(Kevin Vinton)



A previously unknown die combination of 1787 Connecticut Copper turned up on eBay in October. It pairs two known dies, Miller obverse 33.13 and reverse Z.18. I had the good fortune of spotting the auction listing one morning and luckily decided to attribute the coin. I recognized the obverse right away, thanks to the crack through the last C in CONNEC to the ribbon ends. One of the first really nice Connecticuts I ever bought was the Miller Sale-Ford 33.13-Z.7 out of SLT and this obverse, with its myriad cracks and cuds, has been seared into my memory ever since. I then turned to the reverse image, expecting to see either the wide date and wide branch of Z.7 or the narrow date and narrow branch of Z.6, or perhaps one of the rarer pairings with an ET LIR or INDE/INDN legend reverse. Lot of possibilities with 33.13. What I saw was a close date reminiscent of reverse Z.6 or hh.2, but without the narrow branch leaves of Z.6 or the ET LIR legend of hh.2. There appeared to be a heavy break from the B down along the shield to below the exergue line, but this didn't ring a bell. I did a quick scan of 1787 reverses in the Whitman Encyclopedia looking for this break but didn't spot anything. I then went to Randy Clark's new book and used the very helpful branch detail photos on pages 504-505 and quickly matched it up to Z.18. I confirmed the other diagnostics of the die and saw a similar state of the die break illustrated for 33.38-Z.18. It then made sense why I didn't recognize the break – it really only shows up on the 33.38-Z.18 variety which is an R7+ with 5 known, none of which I've handled. I double checked the diagnostics for the 33.13 obverse just to make sure and everything matched up. A new variety!

The coin weighs 113.0 grains, rather light which is in line with most of the other varieties that use either the 33.13 obverse or Z.18 reverse. It grades Fine or so and is well centered with almost all of the date, legends, and devices at least fully outlined. The surfaces are a nice light brown color and have some minor porosity that seems to be natural to the

planchet. There are some thick scrapes on the cheek. There are also some rather unusual looking depressions on both sides, in the left obverse field on the obverse particularly at CTO to the rim, and across the reverse from the left field over the seated figure to the upper right field. These are most likely just planchet flaws of some sort, but they seem to pool around the devices in a way that might require further explanation.

With this new variety, 1787 obverse 33.13 moves into the lead for most prolific pairings in the series, dancing with 8 different reverses. It is trailed by 1787 reverse Z.1 with 7 obverse pairings, 1785 reverse D with 6 obverse pairings, and 1787 reverse Z.11 also with 6 obverse pairings. With so many die combinations, attempting to determine the striking order of each based on die state is an interesting if challenging project. Here is an attempt to order the sequence for 1787 obverse 33.13, taking into account the various cracks, breaks, and clashes. The 33.13-Z.1 combination appears to have been used first and then put back to use later on after other combinations, so it appears twice in the progression.



As for the reverse, 1787 Z.18 was previously known only in combination with 1787 obverses 33.11 and 33.38. The 33.11-Z.18 is a fairly available R5 variety while 33.38-Z.18 is an R7+ with 5 known as mentioned above. The 33.11-Z.18 combination was struck first and comes in three major die states: EDS, perfect or nearly so; MDS, clashmarks and light break from B to cinquefoil; and LDS, deeper clashmarks, aforementioned break heavier and extends down below exergue line, crack from L to dentils. The 33.13 and 33.38 combinations were struck after, displaying a reverse die state similar to the latest state of the 33.11-Z.18 combination but slightly more advanced. It is difficult to determine which of the two (33.13-Z.18 or 33.38-Z.18) came first. The die states of both appear very close and the condition of known specimens does not allow for good study of the more intricate aspects of the die deterioration. I lean toward 33.13-Z.18 coming first, mostly based on the heaviness of the die break as it crosses the exergue line and propose the following sequence.



After more than a century of active collecting and close study of the series, new die varieties of Connecticut coppers continue to be discovered at a fairly steady clip, this being the 6<sup>th</sup> new variety found in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are now 355 total die varieties, not including “mules” or “Bungtowns.” Interestingly, the two most recent discoveries, and the only two of the last 12 years, were both 1787 obverse 33.13 varieties; the other being 33.13-Z.27 of which there are now two known. There are undoubtedly more Connecticut die varieties out there, waiting to be discovered.

*Thanks to Randy Clark for his assistance with this article, including the 33.13 obverse progression plate and die pairing stats, and of course for his excellent new book on the series!*



## **DIG IT? A NEW CONNECTICUT COPPER VARIETY DISCOVERED: 1787 MILLER 33.42-T.2**

(Don Bailey and Jeff Rock)

The discovery of a new die variety of state coinage is always an exciting time in our small niche of the hobby. Some may be surprised that a new variety (or two) would be discovered so soon after a masterful reference work on the Connecticut copper series was published – yet is quite likely that this particular new variety wouldn't actually have been discovered without that book.

First, let's take a look at the variety, and then some details about how and where it was found.



**Figure 1:** The newly discovered 1787 Connecticut copper variety, Miller 33.42-T.2

The new variety is now known as Miller 33.42-T.2 and is a combination of two previously known dies.

Obverse 33.42 was previously known paired with just a single reverse die, Miller Z.2. It is a fairly easy obverse to attribute, as both of the colons lean sharply to the left, which occurs on no other obverse. It is also a rare die, with just a dozen and a half known examples of the 33.42-Z.2 combination, two of which are forever off the market in the collection of the American Numismatic Society; at 18 confirmed the variety has fallen from the Low R-7 it once held to a High R-6, but it will likely not fall lower than that. One of the ANS examples was from the Frederick Canfield collection, with both the Dr. Hall and Henry Miller attribution

numbers inked in opposite obverse fields. The second ANS coin is one the finest known of the variety (we would grade it Choice VF) and was from the Ned Barnsley collection, which was donated to the Colonial Newsletter Foundation, and then to the ANS when it was gifted the collection and the continued publication of *The Colonial Newsletter* (now morphed into the *Journal of Early American Numismatics*). The rarity of the variety is underscored by the fact that it was missing completely from such major collections as Emory Mae Norweb, Herbert Oeschner, Eric Newman, John J. Ford and Donald Partrick. Known examples tend to come well-worn, and on planchets that often show small lamination defects.

The rarity of the variety may be explained by the presence of a prominent die crack at the left obverse seen on most (but not all) examples of the variety. If that crack occurred early in striking and grew quickly, it may have meant that only a relatively small number of pieces were coined from this obverse die before it broke.



**Figure 2:** At left: obverse of Miller 33.42-Z.2, from the Steve Tannenbaum and Twin Leaf collections with a large die crack at left obverse above AUCT. At right: the same variety in an earlier die state, without the cracks visible, from the Ted Craige collection. (Photos courtesy of Stack's Bowers.)

While the surface condition of the new variety is rough and lightly corroded from its time underground, it does appear to be an early die state of the obverse, either without the breaks completely, or with some just beginning to form. This would indicate that either the 33.42-T.2 combination was the first one struck, or that the 33.42 obverse was first paired with Z.2, then T.2, then back again with Z.2 to finish its productive life – while the first possibility is simpler, in the world of Connecticut coppers either one is possible.

The Z.2 reverse, the only one that the 33.42 obverse was known to pair with prior to this discovery, has a different life story. It pairs with five different obverse dies, forming varieties 33.4-Z.2, 33.14-Z.2, 33.19-Z.2, 33.40-Z.2, along with 33.42-Z.2. Three of those

pairings are extremely rare, while only the 33.19-Z.2 and 33.40-Z.2 are remotely collectible. Research on the series would be simple if only one pair of dies was used at a time and once could track the progress of die states through multiple varieties. But, as Randy Clark notes in his book, that for this reverse die “striking order is not a linear progression, since it appears the die was used out-of-sequence. Early states without breaks are found with obverses 33.4 and 33.43. Mid states with die break atop head are found with obverses 33.4, 33.19, 33.40 and 33.42.” Just focusing on the two varieties that come in both early and middle states it’s clear that some 33.4 and 33.42 were struck before the Z.2 reverse die broke, then more of each were struck after it started to break, which means at least three and perhaps four different times in the press combined for just two varieties. 33.4 is also known with the late state of the Z.2 reverse, but 33.43 is not – perhaps by that point the 33.42 obverse die had broken beyond repair.

**Figure 3:** Enlarged area of the obverse of the newly discovered Miller 33.42-T.2 variety.



The T.2 reverse used in the new discovery is a well-known die, nicknamed the “Skeleton Hand” reverse, which has curiously elongated and bony fingers on the hand grasping the liberty pole.<sup>1</sup> This reverse was previously known in three pairings: 33.5-T.2, 33.16-T.2, and 33.36-T.2. Unlike the Z.2 reverse, only one variety is considered rare, Miller 33.16-T.2, with the other two available without much searching. The addition of this new 33.42-T.2 variety changes that to two varieties being common and two very rare (R-7 and R-9 respectively).

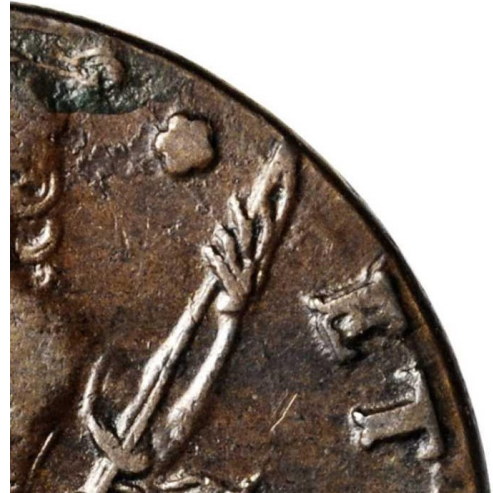
The T.2 reverse die has a more straightforward usage history. Clark notes that the strike order is apparently 33.36-T.2 first, with 33.5-T.2 following and the rare 33.16-T.2 last, with cracks and die breaks forming along the way. While surface condition again makes it difficult to be certain, especially at the lower reverse which was weakly struck to begin with, the new coin appears to be in a relatively early die state. It is unclear whether there is a light break from the third cinquefoil to the seated figure’s head or whether this is an optical illusion caused by some linear surface corrosion in that area. The same is true at the area around ET, which

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<sup>1</sup> The Skeleton Hand nickname dates at least as far back as Dr. Hall’s notes, but Ned Barnsely noted in his article on nicknamed Connecticut coppers that “many other 1787 reverses exhibit the same physical anomaly to a better degree, such as k.5 or GG.” *The Colonial Newsletter*, Vol. 12, No. 1, p. 392

initially looks like a later die state but which may just be surface corrosion. Where this new variety fits into the striking order is just one mystery with the T.2 reverse die.

**Figure 4:** The “Skeleton Hand” feature of the T.2 reverse die (photo courtesy of Stack’s Bowers)



The three different T reverses are actually not new dies, but rather recut and repaired versions of three other dies, all of which were from the r family of reverses. Ted Craige appears to have been the first to figure this out when he discovered the new T.3 reverse in November, 1965 and published his findings in *The Colonial Newsletter*.<sup>2</sup> The T.2 reverse was recut from the r.1 reverse die, adding a final cinquefoil after ETLIB: (which all the r reverses lack), as well as recutting the E and B in the legend, adding an outline to the shield and various other small changes. The T reverses form a tightknit family – three reverse dies paired with the same number of obverses, but only the T.2 reverse pairing with all three obverses, while T.1 and T.3 only came with obverse 33.36. As Randy Clark notes, “the T.2 is part of a rework cluster of obverses and reverses that I had mapped out a while ago. The 33.42 and its normal reverse Z.2 never did seem to be part of that cluster. So it's odd that out of nowhere the 33.42 enters the cluster.”<sup>3</sup> Odd perhaps, but proof that there is still more out there to discover – not just actual coins, but what they tell us about how and when they were made

Don Bailey has been a detectorist for 25 years. He wanted to be an archaeologist when young and was always a voracious reader of anything related to history and coins. On November 7, 2021 he dug up what turned out to be the 356th known variety of a Connecticut Copper (depending on how one counts – the author of the book, Randy Clark, has chosen not to include the extremely crude and exceedingly rare “Bungtown” Connecticut coppers in the variety count, though this second author thinks that if they say AUCTORI CONNEC on them and were made in or very near the timeframe of the official coinage, then they should be considered part of the whole, as is the case with all other counterfeit varieties of state coinages).

As Bailey states, “my lifelong interest served me well because I have always wanted to know what the particular variety of a coin is after I find it. Many times, that leads me to purchasing a new book as it did in this case. I don't just dig up a coin and say, ‘Cool, it's a Connecticut Copper.’ So, when I got home, I took the coin out of my finds case and allowed it to dry overnight (so the dirt would flake off easily). I posted it on Facebook the next day and asked if any of my friends who are good at identifying CT varieties could tell me what

<sup>2</sup> The Colonial Newsletter, Vol. 6, No. 3, March-June 1966, p. 23 (sequential page 164). Craig's article incorrectly notes that the T.2 reverse was cut from the r.3 reverse, but this appears to be a typographical error since he also stated (correctly) that the T.3 reverse was cut from the r.3 reverse.

<sup>3</sup> Randy Clark to Jeff Rock, e-mail communication, November 19, 2021.

variety I had found. That's when things got very interesting.” As can be seen by Figure 5 there was a fair amount of dirt still clinging to the coin when it was found, though because of the soil condition it fared better than most buried copper. Bailey has chosen to do no conservation of the coin, other than brushing off that initial dirt.



**Figure 5:** What the coin looked like, fresh out of the ground, resting on Bailey's XP Deus metal detector. As Bailey notes: "It's a French-made detector that is super-fast and able to pick out good targets in a 250-year-old halo of rusty nails at colonial sites."

“My friend, Don Hartman, who had just purchased Randy Clark's excellent book, noticed that I may have found a new variety of Connecticut Copper. He contacted several experts and one thing led to another which ended with me taking the coin to the Whitman Coin Show in Baltimore for peer review. The rest is history.” What is interesting is that Hartman didn't recognize the coin as something new right off – he was actually looking for pics of some lower grade, unattributed Connecticut coppers to hone his attribution skills with, and Bailey had posted this one on one of the Facebook metal detecting groups when he found it. Without the wonderful pictures and attribution hints in the new Clark book it is likely that this coin could have been tossed aside as an unattributed grounder – one can only wonder if there are other new varieties of colonial coins out there that actually did meet that fate and are now sitting in a jar or box, unattributed and unappreciated.

The coin was dug at an early colonial site in Tolland County, CT. There were three coins found that day by Bailey and two of his friends. One of the friends found both George II and George III British halfpennies, while Bailey found the Connecticut Copper on an old colonial road. It was only about two inches deep and had what detectorists call "a banging signal." The coin had landed on a rock when it was lost so it wasn't buried deep in the ground and was also on a rise in the road so that water could drain away from the coin. If both of those conditions had not been met it is likely that the coin would not have been found – or may have been found so corroded that a variety identification couldn't be done. For a variety that was previously unknown, the loss of one coin may be the difference between a variety being known to the collecting community and one that is lost forever.

Bailey brought the coin to the 2021 C4 convention in Baltimore, where it was examined by a number of specialists, all of whom had no doubts as to either the attribution of the variety

and the legitimacy of the coin – as researcher and dealer John Kraljevich noted, “it looks exactly like every other Connecticut copper that I’ve seen come out of the ground.” The new discovery weighs 126.6 grains, below the official standard but within the range for obverse 33.42 and reverse T.2 coins of all varieties.

After the thrill of discovering a new variety and meeting people with the same appreciation of colonial coins at the Baltimore show, it’s no surprise that Bailey joined C4 then and there – and we look forward to seeing what else he may pry out the ground to surprise us with!



**Figure 6:** Enlarged photographs of both obverse and reverse of the new variety.



**INTERVIEW WITH LOUIS JORDAN  
ASSOCIATE LIBRARIAN, ACADEMIC SERVICES AND  
COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME**

August 16, 2021

(Jeff Burke)

**Introduction**

Louis Jordan, Associate University Librarian, Academic Services and Collections at the University of Notre Dame, kindly took the time to meet with me to discuss his work at the University's Hesburgh Library and show me the Rare Books and Special Collections at Notre Dame on July 26, 2021. We spent almost two hours together looking at select holdings from the coin vault. I conducted a follow up Q & A interview with Louis through an exchange of e-mails in July and August 2021.

On a personal note, I have been visiting the Mishawaka/South Bend, Indiana area several times a year since 1988 to visit family. Although I've been to the Snite Museum of Art at Notre Dame, this was my first visit to the Hesburgh Library.

Louis and I sat down and chatted for about 20 minutes before he showed me a list of contents of what I could pick to see in the vault. He told me about the ongoing project of Dr. Khachatur Manukyan, Research Assistant Professor of Physics at Notre Dame. Manukyan is analyzing the types of inks and paper used in notes during the colonial era. He is ascertaining whether colonies used different inks. He is also examining the metallic content of colonial coppers.

After reviewing the guide, I chose the following notebooks of coins and paper money to examine:

- 19<sup>th</sup> Century U.S. Medals
- Irish Coinage
- 19<sup>th</sup> Century U.S. Medals and Tokens
- U.S. Type Set – 1793-Modern Era
- Boxes of Colonial Notes
- Box of Colonial Coins

Next, Dr. Jordan gave me a fascinating tour of the Rare Books and Special Collections area. What a facility! After retrieving the requested materials from the coin vault, we took the elevator back upstairs and sat down in the Special Collections classroom to look at the specimens. For example, I examined a 6 Pound March 1776 New Jersey bill with border devices credited to David Rittenhouse due to the fact that he engraved the Rittenhouse name in the front left border (thanks to Ray Williams for these Rittenhouse note details).



Louis explained that he uses iconographic analysis of colonial notes and paper with students when he gives presentations in classes at Notre Dame. Louis also pointed out symbols on colonial notes used to help illiterate citizens distinguish between the numeric values.

When we returned to the vault, Louis pulled out some other specimens, including a Massachusetts 1652 Oak Tree Shilling Noe-1, Massachusetts 1652 Pine Tree denominations, a 1737 Higley copper (how exciting!), a beautiful 1792 Half Disme (my favorite piece in the collection), a Maryland Lord Baltimore 6 Pence, a Chalmers 1783 Shilling, a 1776 Continental dollar, several examples of Fugios, a 1786 Vermont Landscape copper, a DK Token, mint state Conder tokens, a set of California Fractional gold pieces in a small display case, and several other items. I felt privileged and thrilled to have had this time with Louis and to be able to see such stunning selections from the Notre Dame coin vault!

### Questions and Answers

**Q: During your Ph.D. program in Medieval Studies at the University of Notre Dame, you studied paleography – how to read Medieval handwriting. How has this skill helped you with colonial research and publications?**

**A:** Practice in deciphering the numerous scripts used in medieval manuscripts makes the challenge of reading cursive 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century colonial handwriting much less difficult. This background certainly helped me in deciphering the jumble of endorsements on the back of several North Carolina notes for a *CNL* article I wrote that followed the circulation pattern of some North Carolina notes as they moved through various counties in the colony.

**Q: You spent ten years as the librarian for the Medieval Institute at Notre Dame. What were the highlights of your time there?**

A: One of my main duties was to curate the collection of microfilms and photographs we had acquired of all the manuscripts and artwork from the Biblioteca Ambrosiana from Milan, Italy. During that time I made several trips to Milan and published three volumes cataloging a portion of the manuscripts. Along with this project I also coordinated an international art exhibition of eighty renaissance drawings from the Ambrosiana that was shown at the National Gallery in Washington, and the art museums at Notre Dame, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Fort Worth. The exhibit was curated by three art historians. My role was to work with the staff at the Ambrosiana, various officials in the Italian government at the provincial and national level as well as cultural affairs staff at the Italian Embassy in Washington to get permission for the loan of the works and also to work with the various museums to set up a schedule and cost sharing for the exhibition.

**Q: Can you describe the history of how Notre Dame first began to have a numismatic collection?**

A: The earliest record I have encountered is from a university publication of September 1887 announcing the acceptance of a donation of a numismatic collection of 2,300 items. [see, *The Notre Dame Scholastic*, vol. 21 (September 1887) 45]. Numerous additional donations followed over the years with our most substantial donor being Robert Gore, Jr., who donated a type collection of U.S. coins and significant collection of colonial coins and currency along with a substantial endowment that has allowed us to continue to strengthen our colonial era numismatic collection. When I became head of Special Collections in 1990, I started working closely with Mr. Gore until his death in 2002.

**Q: After being the Head of Special Collections at Notre Dame for over 20 years, you are now a library administrator in charge of several library programs. How has this changed your role of working with the ND coin vault?**

A: When I took on my current administrative role in 2012, my responsibilities significantly widened to include all library public academic services and collections. At that time I passed most of the Special Collection responsibilities on to others but I retained my role as curator of the numismatic collection. I continue to acquire items for the collection and, as time permits, I still identify and catalog the numerous items in the collection; however, I have far less time available for this work that I would like. To date most of the items have been identified and are accessible. Our holdings primarily include collections of 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century coins, tokens, medals, and paper money from around the world.

**Q: During my visit to your facility, you explained how iconographic specifics can be gleaned from colonial notes and coins to help understand political leanings and historic events. What are several examples of how you have used this technique in the individual lectures that you give in classes at Notre Dame?**

A: The role of coin and paper currency images and inscriptions as part of political propaganda campaigns has long attracted the interest of historians, and revolutionary era paper currency provides several dramatic examples. Typically, history classes are taught about the transformation of individuals from thinking of themselves as colonists protected by British law into revolutionaries believing in the inherent rights of man as the basis for their action. We see this progression in thought starting in the argument of James Otis against writs of assistance in 1761 and culminating in Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* of January 1776. Students can get a graphic idea of how difficult it was to break with a lifelong identity as a British subject protected by parliamentary rights as an Englishman when they see a Massachusetts note from August 18, 1775, depicting an American soldier holding up a copy of the Magna Carta. When the students learn this image was engraved by Paul Revere, they graphically see that a famous patriot who participated in the events related to the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, continued to view himself as a British citizen and not as a revolutionary even after these events and the Battle of Bunker Hill! This helps bring home the revolutionary significance of Thomas Paine's argument to persuade individuals of the need to break from Britain.

There are several other examples such as the Maryland emission of July 26, 1775, showing on the front the burning of Charlestown, Massachusetts by British soldiers while the back depicts a reconciliation with Britain graphically depicting the ideas in the Olive Branch Petition of July 5, 1776. Other currency shows the development of new images to represent a new nation as well as a significant pro-American and anti-British propaganda to bolster support for the war.

**Q: You have an extensive website on colonial numismatics. What future plans do you have for this research tool?**

A: The Notre Dame numismatic websites were started back in 1996 using MacWeb. We significantly revised the website when we moved to Netscape Navigator in 1997 and subsequently updated and expanded the content. I continued to make regular updates through 2010. Since then I have made very few changes and no additions. The library has plans to migrate all the Special Collection web pages to a newer standardized format. I shall be retiring soon and will not be on the staff to oversee the migration. I know the content will remain available for years to come.

**Q: How can we attract people outside of our hobby to become interested in collecting colonial coppers and notes?**

A: From my experience what draws people into the colonial field is the relationship of the item to the history of the era more than the condition of the object itself. For some collectors the pristine appearance of a coin as “red mint” or “lustrous” with no wear is the main attraction for an acquisition. For the colonial specialist a coin may be significantly worn (and maybe even holed) but the historical association of the item with a specific event or mint makes it invaluable.

As people get more engrossed in coins and notes as historical objects, they find themselves wanting to own examples. Because of the significant variety of items to collect, from the traditional “Red Book” varieties to Spanish-American coins to European coins that circulated in America and even wampum beads and other money substitutes, each individual needs to decide what interests them and what price point they are comfortable with from very expensive NE shillings to low-cost VG to F colonial currency. Typically, the more knowledgeable one becomes the larger the area of collecting expands. The more connections we can make with historians, archaeologists and those that just have an interest in the colonial era, the better it will be for colonial numismatics.

**Q: What are your favorite colonial coins and paper money specimens in the Notre Dame numismatic collection?**

A: This is hard because I like it all! Of course I like the Massachusetts silver and I am especially attracted to colonial currency.

**Q: Can you describe some recent acquisitions to the collection?**

A: Some recent colonial currency acquisitions:

- Georgia 1762 five shillings
- Massachusetts June 20, 1744 two pence
- Massachusetts August 1, 1740 six pence, Isaac Winslow merchant note
- Massachusetts September 17, 1776 fourteen shillings, Revere (colony revised to state)
- New Hampshire April 3, 1742, redated 1744 ten shillings
- Pennsylvania June 21, 1759 five pounds, Franklin
- South Carolina 1723 ten shillings

Although not so recent, it is not generally known that about ten years ago we acquired a DK token, the only one not part of the recoveries from the Ferryland excavation in Newfoundland.



## **A VIRGINIA CAST COUNTERFEIT: WHAT WAS THOUGHT NEVER TO HAVE BEEN MADE SUDDENLY APPEARS**

(Roger A Moore MD, Wayne Shelby, and Steve Dolnack)

### **Introduction**

Active exploration for artifacts discovered during the 1970s excavation of an underground portion of Interstate Route I-95 through an area where the Port of Philadelphia existed in the 1700s has provided some interesting numismatic insights. (1, 2) Many of the wide variety of artifacts which were found have been donated to the Independence Seaport Museum by individuals who were active in metal detecting the artifact rich excavations, and piles of dirt transported from the excavation sites. However, many of these artifacts still remain in private collections. Among the many artifacts found are hundreds of numismatic items with the most abundant numismatic item being 1699-dated counterfeit cast copper William III halfpence. Over a hundred of these are retained at the International Seaport Museum holdings and as many as 500 others reside in private collections. Though previously explored (3), these cast William III halfpence have been recently revisited in greater depth. (2) Another group of numismatic items were of leaden counterfeit cast coins – mostly King George II and III halfpence, but also including a variety of diverse cast lead coins. (1) One of these lead cast coins was discovered in a private collection during our inquiries directed to metal detectorists who had been involved in the I-95 artifacts searches. It was a 1773 lead cast of a Virginia halfpenny. This finding was particularly untimely, since a book on the Virginia coinage had been recently published which stated no contemporary counterfeit Virginia halfpence were known. (3) The purpose of this paper is to bring to collectors' attention that contemporaneous counterfeit Virginia halfpence were made.

### **Lead Cast Virginia Halfpenny**

The lead cast Virginia halfpence was found while metal detecting one of the piles of excavated dirt from the I-95 construction site by one of the authors. (SD) This has resided in his private collection for decades and was not revealed until active inquiries were made with known metal detectorists of that era about items found during the I-95 excavations. The cast is in poor condition with a large portion missing and a hole drilled into the top of King George's head. (See Figure 1)



Figure 1 – Pewter cast counterfeit Virginia Halfpenny

The appearance of the cast is extremely crude with indistinct features and details. A general evaluation shows an irregular planchet due to a large portion of the lower left cast (viewed from the obverse) missing and a large hole drilled into the cast at the top of King George III's head. Even discounting this obvious post-casting damage, the cast remains irregular with the obverse half of the cast offset from the reverse due to poor alignment of the obverse and reverse molds during the casting process. The ridge caused by this offset is particularly evident when viewing the left lower edge of the reverse. The obverse does show the outline of King George's bust though two large striations run horizontally across the King's neck. These striations are thought to have been made in the mold when the mold was being prepared. (1, 3) Most of the legend on the obverse is present with "RGIVS III REX" being evident. However, whether a point exists after the "IVS" cannot be discerned, making an attempt to identify the variety questionable. Similarly, the reverse shows a full shield outline and a few of the elements within the shield distinguishable, though the number of harp strings, which is a key element for attributing the variety, are missing. The "VIRG" of the reverse legend is clear as is the "73" in the date. The metrology of the cast is shown in Chart 1.

CHART 1 - CAST VIRGINIA HALFPENNY METROLOGICAL DATA

| CAST     | DATE | ORIGIN  | DIA. E-W | DIA. N-S | WEIGHT | S. G. | AXIS |
|----------|------|---------|----------|----------|--------|-------|------|
| VIRGINIA | 1773 | DOLNACK | 26.2     | 25.7     | 75.9   | 7.3   | COIN |

The official expected weight of a true Virginia halfpenny is 116.7 grains though measurements of actual coins showed a weight range between 107.1 to 126 grains and an average weight of 118.3 grains. (4) The cast weighed only 75.9 grains but the loss of material from the missing piece and the hole obviously reduces the original pre-damage weight. The measurement of the diameters of official Virginia halfpence have an east-west range of diameters between 24.9 to 26.3 millimeters with an average of 25.5 mm, as well as a north-south range of diameters between 24.7 to 26.2 mm with an average diameter of 25.3 mm. (4) One will note that the cast's diameters fall within the expected range for official coins. Typically cast coins have a smaller diameter than coins used to serve as the model for making the impression in the mold, since the metal poured into the mold typically shrinks on cooling.

One difficulty in measuring the diameters of this cast is the edges are irregular and the offset between the obverse and reverse molds may have resulted in a larger overall diameter than what would be seen had the two mold faces fit perfectly. The specific gravity of official Virginia halfpence has a range of 7.1 to 9.6 with an average specific gravity of 8.2. (4) X-ray florescence showed that for all the official Virginia halfpence analyzed over 95 % of the metal was copper. (4) The specific gravity of the cast Virginia halfpence was 7.3 which falls within the range seen for the official copper Virginia halfpence. What this sameness points out is how inexact specific gravity is as a method for determining the metal content of a particular coin. Same or similar specific gravities are obtained with totally different metal mixes. Chart 2 provides the X-ray florescent analysis of the metal make-up of the cast Virginian. One can readily see that the metal content of the cast Virginia halfpenny was nearly equal amounts of lead and tin, making it a low-quality pewter cast. The amount of copper in the cast was negligible.

CHART 2 - CAST VIRGINIA HALFPENNY X-RAY FLORESCENCE DATA

| LEAD           | TIN           | COPPER          | IRON          |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 53.95 (±) 1.16 | 43.69 (±)1.72 | 0.572 (±) 0.123 | 1.79 (±) 0.53 |

The metal make-up of the cast Virginia halfpenny was similar to other cast coins found during the I-95 excavations. (1) So the question that needs answering is, “Was this Virginian cast meant to serve as a counterfeit that could be passed in commerce.” Ignoring the obvious post-casting damage, it is doubtful that this crude pewter cast would ever be accepted by an alert shop keeper. In some respects this is a relief to the authors since it would still hold that no passable contemporary counterfeit Virginia halfpence are known. If not a counterfeit then, why was it made? It has been proposed that it might have served as a mold maker. (5) A mold maker is a coin or other item used to imprint an image into a mold. When a large mold is used with many imprints needed, lead facsimiles are made to serve in making the imprints. The making of lead facsimiles from a single coin in order to imprint large molds is the technique used at the Colonial Williamsburg foundry when showing how colonial coin casting was performed. (5) Alternatively, the Virginia halfpenny cast and other crude casts of different coinages found during the I-95 excavations could simply have been trial pieces made and discarded by a counterfeiter while developing his techniques. The fact that no other Virginia halfpence casts made with any metal composition have come to light – yet – supports the supposition that this cast Virginian was a one-time attempt to make a fake Virginian.

### **Conclusion**

The finding of a pewter cast Virginia halfpenny during the Philadelphia excavation for an underground portion of Route I-95, along with a number of similar casts in other series of coinages, gives some credence to the possibility that contemporaneous counterfeiting of Virginia halfpence might have been attempted. Though the Virginian cast being discussed is not of a quality to have been used as a counterfeit, its existence points to the possibility that cast Virginia halfpence may have joined the many other counterfeited coinages for illegal use in commerce.

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## FRENCH COLONIAL COPPERS OF THE PERPIGNAN MINT 1717-1734

(Martin L. Smith)



Perpignan mint issues of 1717 may have been struck in inferior copper from Mexico. Weight standards for the sol (left) 12.238 grams, for the half-sol (right) 6.119 grams according to Breen. Note the Q mintmark of the Perpignan mint, and the distinctive COLONIES reverse. Photos courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

According to Breen's *Encyclopedia*, the source for most European copper since 1347 was Copper Mountain in Falun, Sweden. The "inferior Swedish copper" has long been blamed for the demise of the 1717 COLONIES issues pictured above. While it probably is true that the copper was inferior, and that few coins could be produced from it, the source of the copper may have been Mexico, not Sweden (Belluteau and Melmoux). One point of interest from Belluteau, is that the original order for the 1717 COLONIES coins called for striking the coins on the same planchets as the *Six Deniers d'Ardennes* coin (anglicized to *Dardennes*). It is known that old cannons were melted down to make the *Dardennes* coins (Breen). This fact alone suggests that France was having problems obtaining copper, from Sweden or anywhere else.

The 1717 COLONIES issues are exceedingly rare. It is possible some were struck on *Dardennes* planchets, but the coins seem to be a different color. The 1717 COLONIES coins, such as those in the A.N.S. Collection above, are yellow in color. The *Dardennes* coins are usually much redder. An analysis of the *Dardennes* coins show them to be copper 87%, tin 11%, zinc 1%, and lead 1% (this paper). Thus, the presence of tin in the alloy is diagnostic for the *Dardennes* copper (absent from other French coins of the period). The Belluteau and Melmoux text suggests that there was a problem in transferring the *Dardennes* copper to Perpignan, so *Dardennes* copper was not used to strike the 1717 COLONIES issues. .



Six Deniers *Dardennes* coin (1710-1713). These coins are bronze. They contain 11% tin. They are unlikely to be host coins for the 1717 COLONIES coins.

According to the Belluteau and Melmoux text, the copper for striking the 1717 COLONIES coins was imported from Mexico. Thus, it was the Mexican copper that was of *mauvaise qualite*. Interestingly, the 1717 COLONIES copper order was not rescinded until 1721. The Perpignan mint was still obligated to strike the coins until 1721, even if there were technical obstacles to do so. In 1719 and 1720, Perpignan again struck copper coins to try to fulfill the 1717 order. But as in 1717, very few coins were struck. There may not be any survivors of 1719 or 1720-dated sols or half-sols carrying the Perpignan (Q) mintmark. Even museums in France do not have them. They were alleged to be of the child head design, with the French coat-of-arms on the reverse. That is, the COLONIES reverse die was not used.

A new copper source was authorized by the Crown in 1722, from the Pyrenees mountains located in southern France. It was these newfound copper mines that provided the copper for substantial Perpignan mint outputs of 1722 and 1723. Perpignan mint coppers carrying 1722 or 1723 dates are readily obtainable today, in contrast to the earlier issues.

A few 1723-dated Perpignan coppers were analyzed for copper alloy composition. The definitive element was 4% iridium, absent from other French coins of the period (Smith *C4N*, Winter, 2019). While it cannot be definitively known the exact moment of transition from Mexican copper to French Pyrenees copper, as noted above, there was a marked increase in the number of coins produced at Perpignan in 1722 and 1723, far above previous output. The French Pyrenees mines would produce copper for the next 30 years (Belluteau and Melmoux). The modern-day map coordinate for French Pyrenees copper mines is 64430 Banca, France. This is a very isolated part of France where the Basque language is spoken.

The copper quality at Perpignan, 1722-1734, may not have been much better than the Mexican copper. Nonetheless, it apparently sufficed for striking some quantities of coins bearing the Q Perpignan mintmark. Other French mints (Paris, Metz, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Reims, and Rouen) did use Swedish copper, which was not at all inferior for the time period.

Large Perpignan mintages in 1722 and 1723 would have provided a circulating coinage. It is not known why Perpignan continued to strike these coins from 1724 to 1734. However, they are a relic of this quaint mint that are obtainable today.

### **Known Examples**

**1722-Q and 1723-Q** are not especially rare. Specific examples will not be listed here.

### **1724-Q**

#### **Sol de 12 deniers**

Extremely Rare. Smith R8. Always irregular planchet. Two reverse die varieties, lily or hat, equally quite rare.

Reverse die variant: Lily. Inverted V used for A in FRANCIAE.

Known examples:

- 1) CGB, same coin shown in Belluteau. Irregular planchet, rim fissure at 4:00, rough edges, lily clear, date clear, Q clear. The rim fissure is between T and I of GRATIA. Grey color. 9.91 grams. 29 millimeters VF. (\$250).
- 2) Jeff Rock. Mottled light green-grey color. Date clear. Q clear. Porosity on obverse but attractive. Protruding rim edges. Fine with reverse weakness on arms.
- 3) Canadian dealer. Medium brown overall. Planchet irregular. Date clear, Q clear, legends clear except AE of FRANCAISES. Reverse weakness left side of shield.

Reverse die variant: Hat. A in FRANCAISES.

Known examples:

- 1) Smith, NGC-Fine details, medium purplish-brown color.
- 2) Arcadia Collection lot 297, Off-center, hat clear, date clear, Q is off-planchet, LUDOVICUS clear, the rest of legend off-planchet, chocolate brown, some roughness on obverse;
- 3) Belluteau listed, French dealer, 7.92 grams. Centered. Only the US of LUDOVICUS is clear. Date is clear. Part of the Q is off-planchet. Legend weak on reverse. (Black-and-white picture in Belluteau).



1724-Q sol NGC-Fine details. In the author's collection for 15 years. Still the nicest one found.  
It can take years to find examples of the rare dates in this series.

### **Half-sol de 6 deniers**

Rare. But not as rare as the larger 24-Q sol. Irregular planchets. Always with die crack through R and under G of GRATIA. Always with stemless lily before the date. Always with inverted V in place of A in the legends.

Known examples:

- 1) Canadian dealer, AU, purple color (\$2000).
- 2) A.N.A. Collection example donated by Richard W. Lloyd estate (pictured in *The Numismatist*, June 1983). Fine-VF.
- 3) Smith, Fine, green malachite color, purchased from CGB for \$200.
- 4) Puig Museum Perpignan 4.61 grams, Fine (Belluteau). The author owns two in Good or so grades, both yellow brass, both from Canada. They all have the die crack through the R and under G of GRATIA, not seen on 1723 or 1725 issues, that is, the die crack is diagnostic for the 24-Q demi-sol. Smith-R6-R7.



Close-up of the die crack diagnostic for the 1724-Q half-sol (compared to no die crack, left). Every specimen (8 or so) examined by the author has this die crack. Also shown close-up is the stemless lily (1722-1724) and the hat (1724-1740) engraver marks, after REX and before the date.

## **1725-Q**

### **Sol de 12 deniers**

Scarce overall. Usually on irregular planchets. There are two reverse die varieties. The hat to the left of the date is scarce. The hat to the right of date is extremely rare.

Hat left of date. Scarce.

Known examples:

- 1) CGB. The rim is rough on about half the coin, but otherwise a clean greyish example, 28 millimeters, 10.78 grams. (\$250).
- 2) Arcadia Collection lot 298, VF. Brown, green, and blue patination. Planchet roughness obscures FRANCAISES, otherwise nice VF.
- 3) Puig Museum Perpignan 9.17 grams, and another 10.49 grams.
- 4) Laurent Fabre, two green verdigris patches that go all the way through, 8.28 grams, 28 millimeters.

Smith owns two examples in VG.

There are five more examples listed in Belluteau reference. Smith-R6.

Hat right of date. Extremely rare.

Known example:

Arcadia Collection lot 299 sale to the author Smith. Christmas color, with green and russet. Much exposed to the elements. Shown here. Smith R8 to R9 because there may be one other example (Arcadia auction text). Unlisted in Belluteau.



1725-Q hat right of date. Rarity 8 or 9.

### **Half-sol de 6 deniers**

Extremely rare. Only one example seen by this author. 23 millimeters. Hat clear. Date 1725 clear. Q clear. Planchet rough, brown with green old inactive verdigris peripherally. Scratch across the chin, and another on the right side of the shield on the reverse. Most of the legends readable. Fairly round planchet for the issue. Possibly another example cited in Belluteau (Laurent Fabre Numismatique, Poses, France). Or it may be the same coin. Smith-R9.

### **1726-Q**

#### **Sol de 12 deniers**

Rare. Two distinct reverse die varieties, hat left or hat right, equally rare. Smith R7. Usually on irregular planchets. Often with defects.

Hat left of date.

Known examples:

- 1) Arcadia Collection lot 300 to author Smith (example shown). Cherry red in color. Child head in EF details. Nice hard surfaces with slight abrasion on the obverse. Die cud at 10:00 on the reverse and die crack running just below the date. Possibly a 6/5 overdate, but in this condition is so rare, the overdate matters less. The die cud causes details on the opposite side to be weakly struck (scallop shell appears to be missing).
- 2) Example shown in Belluteau, 9.02 grams, planchet clip at 2:00 as struck, nice VF+, pictured in black and white, but has a frosty appearance. Almost as nice as the example (1) above.

Two other examples listed by Belluteau, 8.09 grams, and 8.96 grams, respectively. Plus two more examples in low grade, one of them on a split planchet (Smith).



1726-Q hat left of date. Possibly the finest known. The scallop shell mark of mint director Christophe Bourdeau (1713-1731) is missing from the 5:00 position.

Hat right of date.

Known examples:

- 1) Canadian dealer, may be the same coin shown in Belluteau, planchet slightly irregular, brown, Fine+, legends clear and well-centered. Maybe slightly oblong irregular planchet, top-to-bottom.
- 2) Smith example from a French dealer, planchet crack through the head, between E and I of DEI, purplish in color.
- 3) Laurent Fabre VSO-28, VG, legends are full, medium brown, 9.29 grams, 28 millimeters.
- 4) Arcadia Collection lot 301, VG, brown and tan, date and hat are clear.
- 5) One other example listed in Belluteau, 9.44 grams.

**Half sol de 6 deniers.**

Single example in the American Numismatic Society collection, as per Anton and Kesse, 1992.

**1728-Q**

**Sol de 12 deniers**

Known examples:

- 1) Jeff Rock, VF, green coloration, planchet clip at 11:00 as struck. LUDOUICUS.  
This one is a very attractive VF with smooth surfaces; (17) 28 clear, Q clear, much of LUDOUICUS unclear, but one can see the U in place of V. Die crack on the reverse through NAVARRE. Die cud at the base of the shield. Whitish planchet flaw at the rim below bust.
- 2) CGB 29 millimeters, 11.32 grams, light green-grey in color, smooth, hat not visible, LUDOUICUS clear, planchet separation on the edge from 11:00 to 1:00. CGB called this example “unique”. It is not unique, but it is quite rare.
- 3) French collector. Mottled brown, tan, and green appearance, planchet chip below the bust, Q clear, some legends weak, LUDOUICUS clear.
- 4) Smith example. Possibly a ground-find. Uneven planchet, 13.34 grams. But the hat and date are clear. Two other examples listed by Belluteau, 11.32 grams and 9.42 grams, respectively. Note: LUDOUICUS and the hat are diagnostic for 1728-Q issues. Let the buyer beware of coins that say LUDOVICUS. The author has seen three examples on Ebay, in his opinion, misattributed.

**1734-Q**

**Sol de 12 deniers**

Known examples:

- 1) Arcadia Collection, lot 303, dramatic and attractive double-struck example. The second strike is 50% off. Smooth surfaces. Very close to problem-free. Even brown in color. EF. By far the nicest seen by this author.
- 2) Arcadia Collection lot 302, reddish russet color, Fine+ details, gouge in front of face, corrosion.
- 3) Smith example shown, 8.75 grams, 28 millimeters.

Seven others listed by Belluteau. At least four seen on Ebay. The 1734-Q may not be as rare as previously thought, but most examples are damaged.



Smith example of the 1734-Q sol. Mid-range of the grade census.

The scallop shell at 6:00 is the mark of mint director Jean Bourdeau de Bruch (1730-1740).

The hat before the date is the mark of engraver Louis Brodus II (1724-1740).

## Conclusions

The Belluteau book expanded this author's knowledge of the Perpignan mint coppers. It is in French, and the data are from French sources, largely pre-internet. The pictures are in black-and-white. This author, Smith, has studied these coins using internet sources, color pictures, and largely Canadian sources. Integrating these data in one place is a step forward in documenting these rare coins. A more expansive view of the census is expressed in the table below. Note the contrast before and after Belluteau data is added. The number of known examples of some dates doubled (24Q half-sol and 34Q sol) reflecting less rarity. Others did not change (24Q sol and 25Q hat right variety) reflecting greater rarity.

| Date/and Type      | Known examples prior | Known examples including Belluteau | Sheldon Rarity Scale (Smith) |
|--------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1722 sol           | 25                   | N.A.                               | R4                           |
| 1723 sol           | 95                   | N.A.                               | common                       |
| 1723 half-sol      | 21                   | 29                                 | R4                           |
| 1724 sol           | 6 (both varieties)   | 6                                  | R8                           |
| 1724 half-sol      | 6                    | 11                                 | R6-R7                        |
| 1725 sol hat left  | 18                   | 22                                 | R6                           |
| 1725 sol hat right | 1                    | 1                                  | R8-R9                        |
| 1726 sol hat left  | 4                    | 6                                  | R7                           |
| 1726 sol hat right | 4                    | 5                                  | R7                           |
| 1728 sol           | 4                    | 6                                  | R7                           |
| 1734 sol           | 6                    | 16                                 | R6                           |

## References

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## HOW FAST DID MACHIN'S MILLS CRANK OUT COINS?

(Mark R. Vitunic)

Sometimes you read something and then scratch your head and say, “That CAN’T be right!” And if you then keep seeing that same thing cited again and again, you might feel compelled to put pen to paper. In this case, I am referring to a small but important detail which appears in an oft-cited description of the minting operations at Machin’s Mills. The source for this description is a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century interview conducted by a Dr. Hough with Thomas Machin’s son, more than half a century after the closing of the mint and the death of his father. As Thomas Jr. was approximately 5 years old when the mint was last in operation, and an old man himself when retelling the story, his recollection must be taken *cum grano salis*. Below an excerpt of the transcription:

“... The coining press was a screw, with an iron bar about ten feet long through the top. On each end of this bar was a leaden weight of perhaps five hundred pounds. The threads of the screw were large and square and worked through an iron frame. Ropes were attached to each end of the bar, and it was swung about halfway around by two men pulling upon the ropes; two other men pulled the lever back, and a fifth laid on the blank with his fingers. The last operative named sat in a pit so that the lever would not touch his head. The coinage was about sixty per minute. ...”<sup>4</sup>



Above picture from Diderot's *Encyclopédie* 1751-1766.<sup>5</sup>

Primary sources such as this first-hand account are a gold mine for research, and there is no reason to question the physical description of the minting apparatus and its operation, which are consistent with late-18<sup>th</sup> century technology (see picture above), but the coinage rate is extremely suspect. Analyze the scene: a 500 pound (!) weight at each end of a horizontal bar. Whether it was *exactly* 500 pounds or not is not important, but it was too heavy for one man to move such that it required two. Two per side. Four men! And a fifth man sitting in the pit swapping fresh planchets for struck coins. It is difficult to imagine how five men working *in concert* could do anything at the rate of sixty per minute for any length of time. Not even for one coin. And certainly not when part of that task involves moving 1000 pounds back and forth. The “pit man”, clearly not wanting to risk getting his fingers crushed, must have given verbal cues to the four “muscle men” for when to bring the hammer die down, and possibly up as well. Each freshly struck coin may have been briefly inspected by the pit man post striking, while also providing a few seconds of rest for the other four. A poorly struck coin may have been given a second strike; double strikes from this era are commonly encountered. So sixty coins per minute (one per second!) is just not believable. For comparison, the

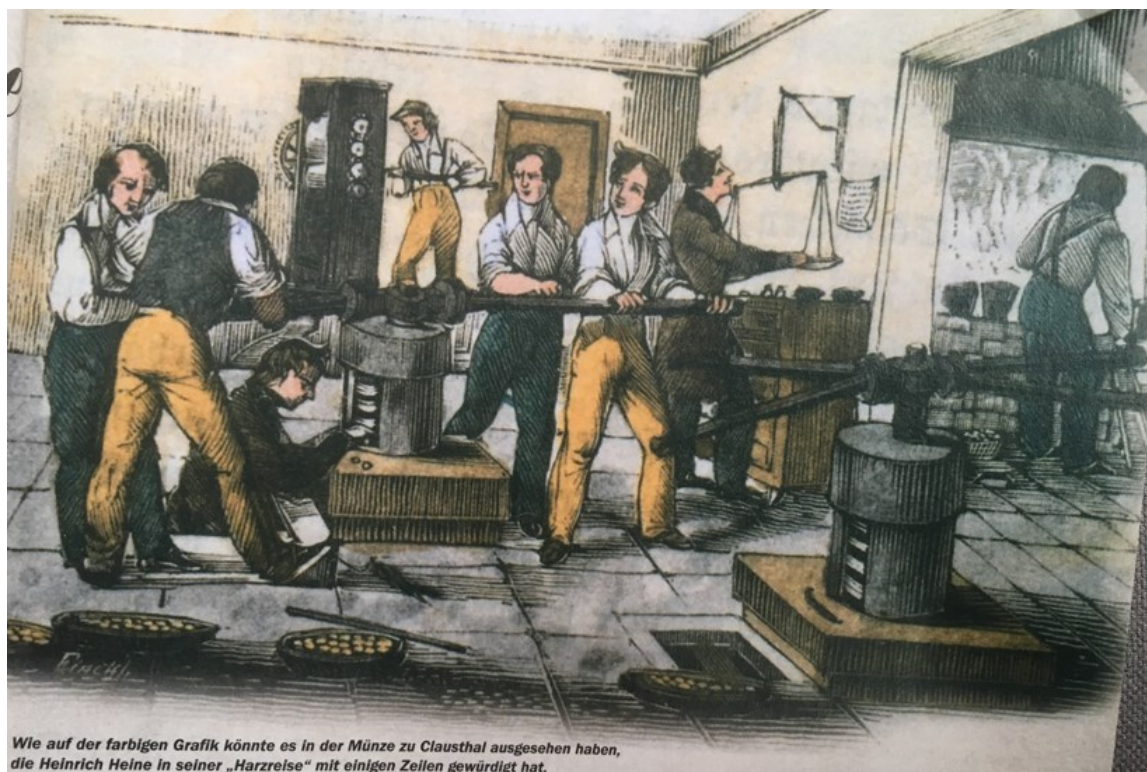
<sup>4</sup> Jack Howes, James Rosen, and Gary Trudgen, *The History and Coinage of Machin's Mills*, C4 2020, pp. 60-61.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pg. 65 and back cover.

Tower Mint in London, arguably the most advanced mint in the world at that time, had a coinage rate for a traditional screw press of approximately 3 coins per minute.<sup>6</sup>

In all likelihood Thomas Jr. either misspoke, misremembered, or a transcription error occurred. Perhaps he said (or intended to say) “sixty per *hour*” or “*six* per minute”. Either would put the Machin’s Mills coinage rate in the same order of magnitude as the Tower Mint rate (1-6 coins per minute vs. 3), which is far more believable.

Below an illustration of another late-18<sup>th</sup>/early-19<sup>th</sup>-century coining press in Clausthal (present-day Germany), based on a contemporaneous description by Heinrich Heine. It is very similar in operation to the Machin’s Mills setup and also a five-man job!



Wie auf der farbigen Grafik könnte es in der Münze zu Clausthal ausgesehen haben, die Heinrich Heine in seiner „Harzreise“ mit einigen Zeilen gewürdigt hat.



<sup>6</sup> Roger S. Siboni, John L. Howes, and A. Buell Ish, *New Jersey State Coppers*, ANS/C4 2013, pg. 47.

## A HUMOROUS NEWSPAPER ARTICLE ON CONNECTICUT COPPERS

(Randy Clark)

During a 2020 search for historical articles on Connecticut coppers an anonymous newspaper article was found in the October 24, 1920, Boston Globe, credited originally to the New York Evening Post. While that author referred to Henry C. Miller's recent publication in the American Journal of Numismatics, the article appears to be a general introduction to Connecticut coppers. What makes this so interesting are the subtle barbs and tongue-in-cheek comments, which the author perhaps intended in all seriousness but are humorous by today's standards.

### Ancient Cents

Some Curious Coppers of Connecticut Minting  
About 400 Varieties Coined Between Revolution and Constitution

If you received in change tomorrow a copper coin not strictly round and somewhat smaller than a 50-cent piece; if the date, "1920," were preceded by a "Lib."; if the adjacent bust resembled no one in particular; if the reverse of the coin should surprise you with such mystic propaganda as "Auciori" (or "Auctopi") "Unit. Sta.," together with "U-Num-Epluribus"; if no allusion could be found on either side to the value of the piece - would you be inclined to take this monetary monster for a good American cent ?

Yet this was just the sort of coin that shrewd Yankees of Connecticut accepted without question as a legal cent, or possibly a "ha'penny," in the topsy-turvy period after the War of Independence and before the Constitution was adopted.

Whether frugality of the Nutmeg Staters had been temporarily suppressed through the relative good times that follow most successful wars, or whether home-made, heavy coppers were regarded as superior, at all events, to the counterfeit and light-weight British "ha'pence" that had been in later years the only petty coins - whatever the reason, the citizens of Connecticut displayed a marvelous prodigality, a distressing carelessness, in their hit-or-miss acceptance of the many crude cent pieces emitted under color of State Authority in 1785-86-87 and 88.

In October, 1785, the General Assembly of the State authorized Samuel Bishop, Joseph Hopkins, James Hillhouse and John Goodrich to establish a mint for the making of copper coins. The dies for these official pieces were created by Abel Buel of New Haven. If some conventional coinage, reasonably correct, had

been the outcome, little interest would now attach to the modest essay of an infant Commonwealth.

Mr. Buel, it is fair to assume, did confine himself to rational limitations, but a multitude of unauthorized die makers apparently flooded the State with coins so opposed to every numismatic rule and every monetary system that they have since become delightful "rarities."

The number of these issues, official and otherwise, approached 400. When Prudence in due time regained her throne Connecticut forefathers - to judge by the many old cents that now exist - must have developed far more interest in the care of minor coins than present day Americans have manifested. Even the widespread counterfeiting of the Buel coppers marked the contrast since recorded betwixt a saving and a prodigal generation.

A multitude of queer Connecticut cents still delight collectors; but according to the recent statement by Director R.T. Baker of the Federal Mint, our current copper coins disappear mysteriously, despite fact that they are put forth in totals so impressive as 3,750,000,000 within a single year.

"We have had to work on cents both Sundays and holidays," says Mr. Baker; "and at certain periods I have all the mints working 24 hours a day on nothing but pennies. They vanish as fast as they are produced." Moreover, it appears, no one nowadays attempts to counterfeit a copper cent.

"Weight and fineness," vital characteristics of a normal coin, were disregarded trifles to the Buel

"school." In the American Journal of Numismatics the late Henry C. Miller of New York, an authority on the early coinages of Connecticut, Vermont and Massachusetts, published recently, as his initial contribution to numismatic literature, a profoundly minute record of virtually every variation in the Connecticut cents, both genuine and spurious. One issue, he says, will weight 108 grains per coin; another, more than half as much again. This difference is observable even in several products of identical dies.

The size, too, was only approximate - fairly circular and somewhat wider than the present quarter-dollar. Thus the State cent of 1785 was a "big, heavy" coin, like the original cent as proposed three years earlier by Robert Morris, who "financed" the Revolution.

Mr. Buel's design, which reappears as an ideal more or less unattainable in all the Connecticut cents, had apparently been influenced by study of foreign pieces. Foreign coins had classic busts, classic symbols, class inscriptions. Wherefore Master Abel placed upon his obverse a dignified unknown, very Roman as to nose, with a laurel wreath upon his brow and with armor or a toga encircling his bust.

The reverse displayed a Goddess of Liberty, who, seated, held an "olive branch," or other vegetable, to be exact, in her right hand, and in her left a staff surmounted by a liberty cap. The date was not overlooked; the borders were duly milled or serrated. But there was never an intimation on any one of these myriad coins as to their denomination, their actual or equivalent value. Not so much as a figure or numeral, like the "V" whose unassisted presence upon a five-cent piece created general protest years ago.

Most unlucky features of all were the classical inscriptions. In Latin, of course, they had to be, like all the mintage of the hated Kings: abbreviated as well for the same reason, no matter how much room there was

for full-grown words. The obverse, therefore, would look pleasing, Abel thought, with its legend, "Auctori Connec."; standing, one fancies, for "Auctoriate" ("By Authority") and for "Connecticut," the words "of the State of" being mentally supplied. Royal coins had never been too explicit.

Then on the reverse, "Inde et Lib," wherein the saving "et" removed a painful suggestion of the vernacular, and even the unlettered might have leave to interpret "Free and Independent" as "Liberty and Independence."

Elementary trifles, all this, to the comparatively numerous scholars of a clever little colony. But, oddly enough, eager counterfeiters, these unlearned profiteers, could not so much as copy the Buel legends letter by letter, despite plain Roman printing.

And it came to pass that "auctori" was transformed into "uctori," "auctobi," "auctopi," even into "auciori." "Connec," usually normal, lapsed once or twice into such novelties as "Connec," with three n's.

Still more unlucky was the second phrase. "Inde" found rebirth as "indl" and as "fnde." But the term that puzzled the experts was "etlib." An "etlib," they must have reasoned, was the fine and foreign name of the new coin - one "etlib," or a new American cent. An "etlir," "et-lir," or "elbib," it read from time to time.

Shrewd, clear-sighted as he was, the Connecticut ancestor oddly felt no need for any official designation on his new coppers. Sometimes, too, he seemed to be mistaking the ancient Roman laurels for a modish wig. In any case, a "copper" was a copper, quite as useful at the village store whether labeled an "et-lir" or an "elbib."

- New York Evening Post

The modern reader hopefully appreciates this anonymous author's candor in describing Connecticut coppers as "monetary monsters". I particularly enjoyed his comment, "weight and fineness, vital characteristics of a normal coin, were disregarded trifles to the Buel school" and "the reverse displayed a Goddess of Liberty, who seated, held an olive branch or other vegetable." As he says, "a multitude of the queer Connecticut cents still delight collectors" to this day.



## THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NOVA CONSTELLATIO COPPERS

(Joseph Kinney)

*[Editor's note: Joseph is a sophomore at Castleton University in Vermont majoring in History. He submitted this paper for a course on Material Culture. We welcome Joseph as a new C4 member!]*

### Abstract

When the United States of America was in her infancy in the early 1780's, the colonial world of trade and commerce was dominated by the most reputable currencies of the era, among those being the Spanish Reals, French Francs, and of course the British Pound. The United States did not have her own federally backed coin yet, and various people started to come up with patterns to try and establish a federal money for Congress. The most famous of these was a venture taken by Robert Morris and Gouverneur Morris (no relation) in the 1780's, which saw the creation of the Nova Constellatio coins, consisting of silver pattern pieces and copper tokens of the same design. These coins are regarded by numismatists as the first coins struck under the authority of the United States in the early 1780's, and the copper token variants were used in the young states as a de facto currency, being exchanged for the same value as the British halfpenny that was already in mass circulation among the states. The token's design portrays various symbols, such as the Eye of Providence and thirteen stars, and words inscribed are indicative of the values of the country and its target audience at the time, that being the United States Congress.

### Introduction

When the thirteen American colonies fought for and won their independence in 1783 over the tyrannical rule of Great Britain to establish the United States of America, one problem quickly became evident. The staple of any successful and prosperous country is her economy, and for this many countries have their own currency and system of commerce. The United States, under the Articles of Confederation at the time, had only just entered into existence in 1783 and did not have the infrastructure, nor the capability to coin her own currency, and neither did Congress even have the constitutional right to do so yet. Robert Morris, one of Philadelphia's most wealthy and reputable statesmen, member of the Second Continental Congress in 1775 as a delegate from Pennsylvania, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, would be one of these people to try and establish America's money.<sup>1</sup> Morris served during the revolution, not as a soldier but as the prominent financier of the war. In 1781 Congress appointed Morris as the Superintendent of Finance, where he would be in control of financing the Continental Army during the war. He would serve this post through 1784, and during this time be responsible for the creation of a National Bank for the United States, a bank that would be succeeded by Alexander Hamilton after the ratification of the United States Constitution.)<sup>2 3</sup> With Morris' appointment as Superintendent of Finance, Gouverneur Morris became his assistant, helping write Robert Morris' coinage report

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<sup>1</sup> Jason Dencklau, "Robert Morris," *The Digital Encyclopedia of George Washington*, Mount Vernon Ladies' Association.

<sup>2</sup> Eric P. Newman, "New Thoughts on the Nova Constellatio Private Copper Coinage" *Coinage of the American Confederation Period*, October 29, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Dencklau, op. cit.

of Jan. 15, 1782.<sup>4</sup> Speaking of Gouverneur Morris, who will become a prominent figure in the creation of the Nova Constellatio patterns, he was a signer of the Articles of Confederation in 1783 as well as the later U.S. Constitution and was jointly involved with Robert Morris in securing military funding for the Continental Army.<sup>5</sup> Morris would be equally involved with the creation of the Nova Constellatio patterns and tokens as Robert Morris was, as he was one of the copartners of William Constable & Co., a “joint Copartnership as Merchants” including himself, Robert Morris, and William Constable. This partnership, later including Englishman John Rucker of London to make the name “Constable, Rucker, & Co.”, would be responsible for the importation of the Nova Constellatio copper tokens in the 1780’s.<sup>6</sup>

### **Robert Morris’ Coinage Proposal**

It is in Robert Morris’ coinage report of 1782 that we first see mention of his proposals of a new national currency. One of the first reasons that Morris gives for the need for new coin is the inevitable trade between states across the country. Each of the states have their own interpretation and measurement of the British Pound, the currency used before the war, which reveals the need for a nationalized coin. Quoting from Robert Morris’ letter to the President of Congress, January 15, 1782: “The Ideas annexed to a Pound a Shilling and a Penny are almost as various as the States themselves.”<sup>7</sup> If the states are to be a united body and plan to conduct commerce amongst themselves, a national unit and measurement is paramount. In his letter to Congress, Morris also provides a real-life example of what may occur, and what is occurring, without a nationally recognized standard in place: “A Farmer in New Hampshire for Instance can readily form an Idea of a Bushell of Wheat in South Carolina weighing sixty Pounds and placed at one hundred Miles from Charlestown but if he were told that in such Situation it is worth twenty one Shillings and eight Pence, he would be obligated to make many Enquiries and form some Calculations before he could know that this Sum meant in general what he would call four Shillings.”<sup>8</sup>

He highlights the current problem that all of the states have virtually their own understanding of what money is worth, and that this makes exchange and commerce between the states a challenge.

After the revolution’s end, the country was in economic disrepair, as the Continental Dollar was near being worthless, as compared to the Pound. Another reason which prompted Robert Morris to begin the coinage venture in the 1780’s was the mass depreciation of the country’s wartime money, the Continental paper Dollar. A *Report of Commissioners on Bureau of Labor Statistics* from 1872 provides the account of a certain Hon. John Prentiss, a man of Keene, New Hampshire. He gives his record of the Articles of Confederation days, when there was no infrastructure for the economy. “I have a vivid remembrance of the period of the torubulous times, from the acknowledgment our Independence in 1783, (under the old Confederation) to the year 1792, when I left the farm; and the poverty of the people in everything but the soil and their dwellings. No bank-no paper money-no shipping or commerce.”<sup>9</sup> Prentiss’ first-hand account of

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<sup>4</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Annabel LaBrecque, “Gouverneur Morris,” *The Digital Encyclopedia of George Washington*, Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association.

<sup>6</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>7</sup> “Robert Morris to the President of Congress, January 15, 1782, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> James Campbell, “Report of Commissioners on Bureau of Labor Statistics to the Legislature, June Session, 1872,” *James M. Campbell, State Printer*, 1872.

his experiences represents the feeling of many workingmen and merchants of the day, as while not everyone is affected by war, all are affected by the state of the economy. The Continental Dollar was unreliable as a currency, fluctuating in price through the war and afterwards. In the report it is shown the effects that a price change could have on the public. If the price of the Dollar becomes unreliable, merchants will be hit especially hard, as many of them conduct business on a form of credit, so a drop in price could destroy them.<sup>10</sup> It is no secret that an economy of any nation cannot function, let alone grow, when its very foundation, its currency, is flawed and unreliable. The statistics page also cites a table representing the wildly varying price of the Continental dollar (or “paper” as the record calls it) as compared to £100 worth of silver. The table begins in January 1777, where the Continental dollar is just about equal to silver, at \$104 to £100. However, this all goes by the wayside as soon as December that same year, showing a \$310 to £100 exchange rate. It gets even worse in June 1781, with the hyperinflated \$12,500 to £100 exchange.<sup>11</sup> At this point it was evident that a new currency was needed, one that wasn’t hyperinflated, nor consisting of a varying price across the states.

To solve this issue of a nationwide currency, Robert Morris enlisted the help of Gouverneur Morris to devise a new set of coins for circulation in the states.<sup>12 13</sup> The pair devised a new coin, one based off of a *Unit* system, with the pattern coins struck in silver and copper, bearing unit denominations of 5, 100, 500, and 1000 units. The logic behind the odd denominations is based off of the calculations made by Robert Morris in 1792.

*“The various Coins which have circulated in America have undergone different Changes in their Value so that there is hardly any which can be considered as a general Standard unless it be Spanish [sic] Dollars. These pass in Georgia at five Shillings in North Carolina and New York at eight Shillings in Virginia and the four Eastern states at six Shillings in all the other States except South Carolina at seven Shillings and six Pence and in South Carolina at thirty two Shillings and six Pence: The Money Unit of a new Coin to agree without a Fraction with all these different Values of a Dollar except the last will be the fourteen hundred and fortieth Part of a Dollar equal to the sixteen hundreth Part of a Crown. Of these Units twenty four will be a Penny of Georgia, fifteen will be a Penny of North Carolina, or New York, twenty will be a Penny of Virginia and the four Eastern States sixteen will be a Penny of all the other States except South Carolina and forty eight will be thirteen Pence of South Carolina.”<sup>14</sup>*

Robert Morris, or really Gouverneur Morris, as he was the “ghost writer” of the letter for Robert Morris, breaks down the various states’ coinage, and finds the common denominator of each states’ currency as being 1/1440<sup>th</sup>, and off this is what the Nova Constellatio patterns will be denominated as.<sup>15 16</sup> Also, in this excerpt from Morris’ letter to Congress, is his reference to the “spanish dollar” being among the only coin that has not undergone change and is the “general

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Campbell, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Sylvester S. Crosby, “The Early Coins of America,” *Published by the Author, Boston MA*, 1875.

<sup>13</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> “Robert Morris to the President of Congress, January 15, 1782, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<sup>15</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> Crosby, op. cit.

standard.” This feeling will be later shared by Thomas Jefferson in his own *Notes on Coinage*. See Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** “The Spanish Dollar” as quoted by Robert Morris and Thomas Jefferson. The Spanish 8 Reales coin was regarded as a standard of currency in the colonies, it being one of the most reputable and trusted coins of the era.

### Jefferson and the Coinage Proposal

Morris bases the coin on a decimal system as previously mentioned, except they will be minted with varying amounts of silver, as corresponding to their value. The standard he established for the patterns was that each Unit would represent  $\frac{1}{4}$  grain of fine silver, and each pattern would be minted off of that standard of Unit to silver.<sup>17 18</sup> This idea of more silver composition equals more value has continued for hundreds of years, and only ended when the United States abandoned the silver standard in 1964 for much of its coin in the Coinage Act of 1965. Today, all general business-struck coins are made out of a copper-nickel alloy.<sup>19</sup> Morris’ plan is relayed in Robert Morris’ May 1784 letter to Thomas Jefferson, who himself had his own opinion on how the currency system be established. It was from these deliberations and judgements that Jefferson and Morris would become the pioneers of American coinage.<sup>20 21</sup>

From *Jefferson’s Notes on Coinage* from March-May 1784, we see that Jefferson believed that there were two key aspects of a currency that make it useful, the first being that it is a manageable and convenient size, all proportionate to each other. Next, they needed to be in simple multiples, making it easy for transactions. “The Spanish Dollar seems to fulfill all these conditions.”<sup>22</sup> One may think that this fits the exact aforementioned traits of Morris’ coinage. And one would be right. The *Units* as proposed by Morris are proportionate in size and they are relatively easy to multiply or divide by. So why would Jefferson oppose to his coinage proposal? Their main difference is that Morris’ Unit system would be a terribly undervalued currency, while Jefferson preferred the higher valued dollar system.<sup>23</sup>

According to Jefferson, the country should adopt the Dollar instead of Morris’ new units for numerous reasons. The Units, being based off of the old states’ currency and the  $\frac{1}{1440}$ <sup>th</sup> common denominator ratio, are too undervalued for general use, the Dollar is already well-known

<sup>17</sup> Robert Morris to the President of Congress, January 15, 1782, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<sup>18</sup> Crosby, op. cit.

<sup>19</sup> Coinage Act of 1965, Pub.L. 89-81, 79 Stat. 254, enacted July 23, 1965.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Morris to Jefferson, May 1, 1784, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<sup>21</sup> David McCarthy, “Nova Constellatio: Identifying the First American Coin,” *The Numismatist*, August 2017.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on Coinage*, [March-May 1784], *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Morris to Jefferson, May 1, 1784, *Founders Online*, National Archives.

to the people, and the dollar denominations are already familiar to the people from the Spanish dollars. The most important reason that Jefferson does not endorse Robert Morris' system of units, is that they would be massively undervalued. Jefferson says that the *Units* are drastically undervalued, as if the country was to adopt the units as currently proposed, it would require 1440 of his Units to equal one Dollar.<sup>24</sup> He also cites that the Dollar, being used throughout the Northern and Southern states, simply makes more sense to use since it is a uniform currency, unlike Morris' Units. I will quote from his Notes directly here, as his true emotion towards the Units and Pounds vs. the Dollar can be given full justice and allowed to be fully expressed.

*"I know of no Unit which can be proposed in competition with the Dollar, but the Pound. But what is a Pound? 1547. grains of fine silver in Georgia; 1289. grains in Virginia, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire; 1031 ¼ grains in New York. Which of these shall we adopt? To which state give that preeminence of which all are so jealous? And on which impose the difficulties of a new estimate for their corn, their cattle and other commodities? Or shall we hang the pound sterling, as a common badge, about all their necks?"*<sup>25</sup>

Jefferson really lets his colors fly in his personal notes, and he is not done here. Jefferson also thinks that we should model our currency system off of the Spanish dollar, or the 8 Real coin, an example of such thinking is seen in the next point of his notes. Through the notes, he frequently cites the Spanish reals as a good foundation and system to base the U.S. currency off of. The "Spanish Bit", which refers to the 1 real Spanish coin, would represent a 1/10 ratio of the dollar. Compare this to the modern dime, being 10 cents, or 1/10 dollar. Jefferson claims the coin is "Perfectly familiar to us all. When we shall make a new coin then equal in value to this, it will be of ready estimate with the people."<sup>26</sup>



**Figure 2:** The Spanish ½ Real coin which, under Jefferson's interpretation, would have been equal to 5 cents, or 5/100 dollar. This example was minted in Guatemala under the authority of King Charles III in 1762. These would have been in circulation throughout the colonies and were U.S. legal tender until the Coinage Act of 1857.

Jefferson's further push for U.S. coins to be modeled after the Spanish is shown later, when he advocates for five different silver denominations of coin to be put into circulation, which echo the Spanish reals, one of which being a dollar, then a ½ dollar, followed by a twenty unit/cent piece (1/5 dollar), then of course the 1/10 piece, and finally the 5/100 piece.<sup>27</sup> However, it was Morris' silver Nova Constellatio patterns that sparked the creation of their copper token counterparts, which have an interesting role in early United States coinage.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Jefferson's Notes on Coinage, [March-May 1784], *Founders Online*, National Archives.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

## The American Halfpenny

*“The American Congress have lately made a copper coinage, which is now in general circulation: one side of the halfpenny bears this circular inscription, “Libertas et Justitia;” round a central cypher U. S.-On the reverse is a sun rising amidst thirteen stars, circularly inscribed “Constellatio nova.”*<sup>28</sup>

After Robert Morris’ and Gouverneur Morris’ failed coinage proposal to Congress in 1784, they set out for another goal. If they were not to be the creators of the nation’s coinage, they would at least solve one problem the young states had with coinage: making change. For much of the following information, I have consulted *The Coins of Colonial and Early America*, a project of the Robert H. Gore, Jr. Numismatic Endowment from the University of Notre Dame, and also the previously cited Eric P. Newman’s *New Thoughts on the Nova Constellatio Private Copper Coinage*. It was after Congress rejected the Morris’ design that they entered into the co-partnership with William Constable, creating William Constable & Co., for the purpose of creating a coin that would serve as a change coin.<sup>29</sup> British coppers, specifically, the King George III halfpenny issue, was a coin that would have been widely circulated in all of the states, pre- and post-revolution. These weighed approximately 10 grams and were composed out of copper. The Nova Constellatio coppers weighed approximately 6.9g, and again, were composed out of copper.<sup>30</sup> The tokens are about the same size of a modern U.S. half dollar, or more closely, almost the exact same size as the U.S. large cents minted from 1793-1857. They are made out of copper and depict a design on both faces of the coin. On the obverse, the center reads “U.S.” in capital Roman letters, surrounded by a counterclockwise wreath of 24 petals; around the wreath are the words “LIBERTAS (quatrefoil) JUSTITIA”, followed by the “●1783●”. On the reverse, in the center of a glory of sun rays is the Eye of Providence, and the rays emitted from said eye are intersected by a circle of thirteen stars. Surrounding the stars and rays around the rim of the coin are the words “NOVA CONSTELLATIO” or “NOVA CONSTELATIO”, depending on what variety you are looking at.

The coppers were similar in appearance, but different in weight. These would have been cost-effective to ship overseas to America, as they were minted in Birmingham, England.<sup>31</sup> The copper Nova Constellatio tokens did not only serve as a medium of exchange but are also believed to be used to counter British counterfeiters, who “had been flooding the American economy with poor quality lightweight halfpence.”<sup>32</sup> This is also backed up in the March 16, 1786 issue of the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, which states a correction from the previous March 14, 1786 issue.

*“A correspondent observes that the paragraph which has lately appeared in several papers, respecting a copper coinage in America is not true. The piece spoken of, bearing the inscription “Libertas et Justitia, & C” was not made in America, nor by direction of Congress. It was coined in Birmingham, by the order of a Merchant in New York, many tons were struck from this dye, and many from another; they are now in circulation in America, as counterfeit half pence are in England.”*<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> William Woodfall, *Morning Chronical and London Advertiser*, March 14, 1786.

<sup>29</sup> Louis Jordan, “The Coins of Colonial and Early America,” *University of Notre Dame*.

<sup>30</sup> “1783 Nova Constellatio Copper,” *Numista*.

<sup>31</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Jordan, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> William Woodfall, *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, March 16, 1786.

This printing of the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* is one of the first mentions of the Nova Constellatio copper, and it appears in English press, but why in 1786? Of the variants of Nova Constellatio coinage, there are three different years struck on them, 1783, 1785, and the rare 1786. Surely, if there were Nova Constellatio coppers struck in 1783 as the token indicates, then it would have been in the news around 1783 or 1784 at the latest.<sup>34</sup> If we dissect the article published by the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, we can see that it describes the lettering as “Libertas et Justitia” and “Constellatio nova.” We are concerned with the phrase “Libertas et Justitia”, because this can help us determine the examples the newspaper had when publishing that issue. Using Sylvester Crosby’s guide, *Early Coins of America*, published in 1872, we can determine this. In his book, he covers all of the colonial and post-colonial coins of Early America. Among these are the Nova Constellatio coppers of course. He includes a table of the coins by year, obverse and reverse, and describes all of the design changes that would constitute a variety. From the table, we see that none of the 1783-dated coppers contain the word “et” in between “Libertas” and “Justitia.” This only appears later on the 1785-dated coppers and continues to the 1786 coppers.<sup>35</sup> From this information, we can reasonably assume that the copper Nova Constellatio tokens dated 1783 and 1785 were all struck in 1785, and the 1783-dated examples most likely used the same dies used on the pattern examples from 1783.<sup>36</sup> The copper tokens did not last very long in circulation, either, in part by a couple of factors. Of course, these tokens were not backed nor issued by the federal government, but this did not stop them from circulating within the new states as de facto currency. However, with the coins being as lightweight as they were and with the arrival of new state coinage, specifically coming from Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and the Republic of Vermont, they were taken out of circulation either for restriking as state coppers or for being worth too little, on part of their copper weight.<sup>37 38</sup>

With all of this being said, it can be reasonably assumed and suggested that the Nova Constellatio copper tokens were introduced about 1785, based off of the *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* article, and they were taken out of circulation—either by lack of value or reuse by state mints—by about 1787-1788 with the minting of state coinage. This means that the tokens would have only seriously circulated for three to four years total, maybe five at the absolute maximum.

### **Resurgence of the Nova Constellatio**

While the life of the extremely few and unique Nova Constellatio silver patterns are over, being auctioned to the highest bidder or kept away in massive private collections, the Nova Constellatio copper tokens are having an almost “second life” from their post-colonial days. Due to the relative abundance of Nova Constellatio coppers being struck in the 1780’s, and also due to their widespread circulation among the young states, many of the coppers have been deposited into the soil and lost to time—until the invention of the metal detector. The main inspiration behind this paper came from my own discovery of a Nova Constellatio token. (See Figure 3.) While on one of my many metal detecting outings, I discovered this token in Benson, Vermont, and it had

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<sup>34</sup> Newman, op. cit.

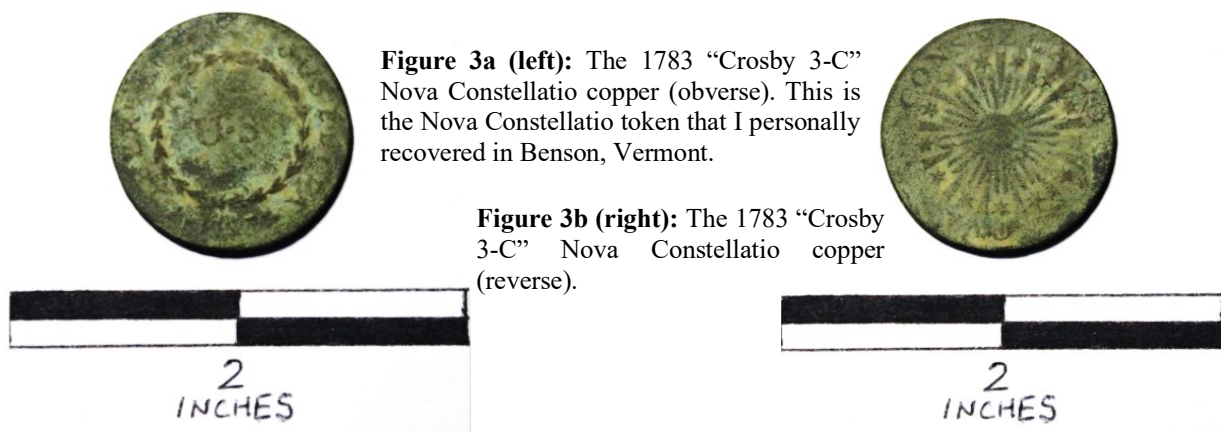
<sup>35</sup> Crosby, op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>37</sup> Jordan, op. cit.

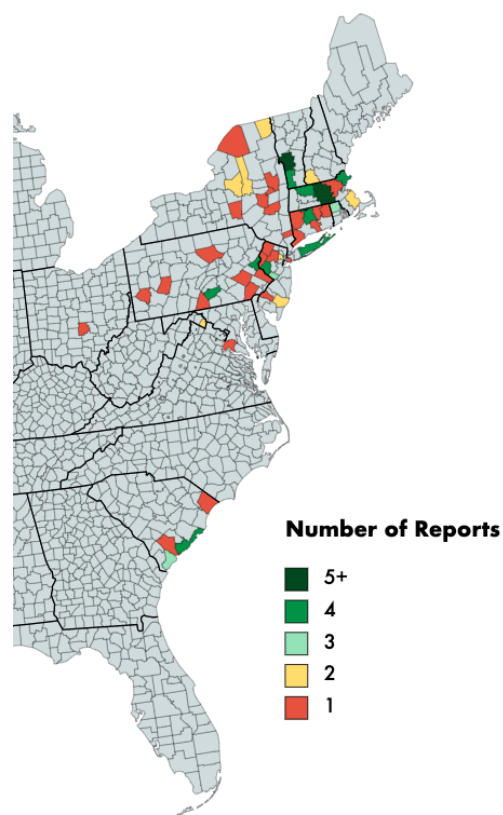
<sup>38</sup> Newman, op. cit.

remarkable detail, and later from my research I designated it as being one of the “Crosby 3-C” varieties, dated 1783.<sup>39</sup>



At the time of discovery, I knew what the coin was and how scarce they were in the metal detecting world, but I never understood their origins or their role in the post-colonial era of United States history. Over the course of my research for this paper, many, if not all of the sources and articles about the token seem to generally point to the token as being a de facto currency used by the new states before the arrival of individual state coinage. In order for myself to cite this information in my own writings I felt the obligation to include my own piece of original evidence to support what is already known by researchers, and evidence that will hopefully be of use to other researchers and numismatists of colonial coins in the future.

**Figure 4:** This is the heat map results from the recovery survey I conducted over the course of my research. The number shown in each respective state represents the number of Nova Constellatio coppers recovered by detectorists in that state, and these can be of any die variety.



<sup>39</sup> Crosby, op. cit.

My evidence for the conclusion that the coppers circulated throughout the new United States is an original survey I conducted among people of the metal detecting community over social media platforms and from oral testimonies. I informed the community of my research undertaking about the Nova Constellatio coppers, and asked the detectorists if they, or someone they know, has ever recovered one of the tokens before and if they have, to let me know of the state and county it was found in. The results, represented in Figure 4, show a wide dispersion of the coppers very much throughout the eastern United States, and even one being reported in the what-was-then-known-as the Northwest Territory.

It should be kept in the mind of the reader, however, that this map is still very limited, as the survey it is derived from was exposed to about 6,200 people, and of that I received (including oral testimonies) 103 total entries in the survey. I acknowledge that there have been other Nova Constellatio coppers recovered that are not represented on this map, however I believed the number of entries is sufficient in showing a clear pattern of distribution, and that any further entries would merely follow this pattern.

The heat map of the eastern United States shows a clear distribution of the coppers in the New England and central states region, which is to be expected since the coppers were originally imported from Birmingham, England into New York City for circulation.<sup>40 41</sup> However, contrary to many sources' claims of the coins being primary associated with New York, the majority of recovery reports come from Massachusetts, then followed by New York and New Jersey. I found this quite surprising, and while it is no ground-breaking discovery by any means, it does suggest that after their arrival in New York Harbor, a sizable portion of the tokens gradually circulated to Massachusetts one way or another. Also revealed through the survey map, is that there are Nova Constellatio coppers being recovered in the southern states and even one reported in Ohio, which at the time would have been part of the Northwest Territory. While this is only one of the 103 total reported entries, it still shows the settling of early Americans into the Northwest Territory during the late 1780's after the Revolutionary War.

### **Material Culture**

The copper, as well as the original tokens themselves, represents symbols that are indicative of American's current values and the spirit of the new republic. The token shows the symbols of the Eye of Providence, as well as the iconic wordage of "LIBERTAS" and "JUSTITIA", two of the values that the revolutionary Americans fought the war over. "The NOVA CONSTELLATIO private copper coinage embodies the radiant enthusiasm of the United States as a new nation and features the goal of liberty and justice which inspired the achievement of independence."<sup>42</sup> To figure out more of the material culture aspect of the copper, I researched the history of Benson, Vermont (the town where I recovered it) to try and figure out the answers to the questions I had, those questions being who might have been in possession of the token in the short period of the token's circulation between 1785 and the late 1780's, what type of class standing were they in or what occupation did they practice, and what can this tell me about the token's use in the states. To answer these questions, I needed to dive deep into the local history of Benson to find evidence of the types of people residing in Benson at the time, as well as the overall history

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<sup>40</sup> Jordan, op. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Newman, op. cit.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

of the Benson settlement. Using the original town records, and with the help of the Town Clerk, I was able to make possible conclusions about the token's material culture.

The Town Clerk and I painstakingly scoured through piles of volumes of town records and land deeds to figure out not only *who* might have been on the land, if anyone, at the time to help paint the picture of the person who might have possessed the coin some 236 years ago. We first tried to trace the land deed records back from the current owner to as far back in time as we could get. Beginning at Vol. 72 in 2021 and following the guarantor-guarantee breadcrumb trail to Vol. 8 in 1814, we realized that the ownership history of that particular piece of land was lost to time.<sup>43</sup> This was because for all the volumes before this one, the deeds did not reference the Grantor to the Grantee anymore, and the land in question was being subdivided to various people; therefore, trying to follow any one particular path would prove an unrealistic endeavor.

It was here that we started another approach. Instead of going from the present back to 1785 we tried to start at the beginning of Benson's charter and go from there. Here I learned some news that I initially thought was going to be fatal to my research, that virtually nobody actually *lived* in Benson in the first decade or so of its charter. Benson only had a real population in 1790, with 658 people living there.<sup>44</sup> The land that would become Benson, Vermont, was divided up into 80 different 100-acre plots for the 75 original 1780 proprietors of Benson, with 5 of the lots being set aside for public use. This is mentioned in one of the first meetings of the proprietors on June 10, 1779.<sup>45 46</sup> "I. Voted that thier be one hundred acres laid out on each proprietor right in the town of Benson for the first division lots."<sup>47</sup> Of course, these proprietors did not *live* in the town of Benson at the time. Since coming into possession of the tracts of land, the records indicate that each plot was continuously traded, sold, or mortgaged to different people constantly for decades. The map of Benson at the time is nothing similar to its current version. The town in 1780 lacks any kind of buildings, or roads for that matter, as it was granted to the proprietors by the State of Vermont and then divided up in a grid-like pattern by a committee organized by the proprietors (Records of the Town of Benson, Volume 1.) Originally, upon learning this information, I looked for the surveyors who would have surveyed the land for the 100-acre plots. However, I figured out from the records book that the committee people organized by the proprietors were the ones to draw up the initial plots, not surveyors, and that only in the later divisions of land the proprietors brought in professional surveyors to mark off land for sale or trade. From the *Meeting of the Proprietors of Benson Held According to the Adjournment of June the 10<sup>th</sup> 1779*, there is a mention of a certain "Johnathan Meacham, Ezekiel Blair, Absalom Baker, David Johnson, and Benoni Hurlburt be a committee to lay out said hundred acre plots" and later supply the surveyor of "a true copy of their doings."<sup>48</sup> The committee people used rudimentary markings to draw up the boundaries and based the edges of each rectangular plot in relation to, and I'm not kidding, tree stumps, mounds of dirt, rocks, or any other natural feature.<sup>49</sup> The Town Clerk and I were able to see from a map overlay with the current property map of Benson and the original 1780 grip map of Benson that the property which the Nova Constellatio copper I recovered came from Lot No. 43, which was one of the five lots set aside for school's rights. (See Figure 5.)

<sup>43</sup> Benson Land Records, Vol. 8-72.

<sup>44</sup> *United States Census*, Benson Vermont, 1790.

<sup>45</sup> Records of the Town of Benson, Vol. 1.

<sup>46</sup> Hamilton Child, "Gazetteer and Business Directory of Rutland County, VT., for 1881-82," *Published by the Author, Syracuse, NY*, August 1881.

<sup>47</sup> Records of the Town of Benson, Vol. 1.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

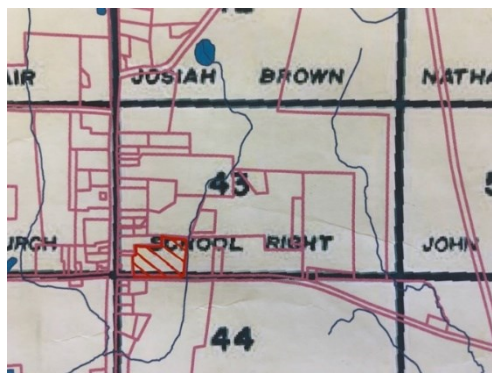


**Figure 5:** The current road map of Benson, Vermont overlaid with the 1780 proprietor's map of the land. The plot of land marked in red is the recovery location of the Nova Constellatio copper.

While neither the proprietors nor committee people were on the land during the time of investigation, that being the Nova Constellatio's short existence from 1785-1788, someone who was there is surveyor Asa Farnam. Asa Farnam was a surveyor for Benson during the early years of the town's charter, surveying the later divisions of land in the early- to mid-1780's, but more importantly is reported by the Benson Land Records as being the one to survey and carve out the road which bounds Lot No. 43 on the southern border and is which is now known as Lake Road.

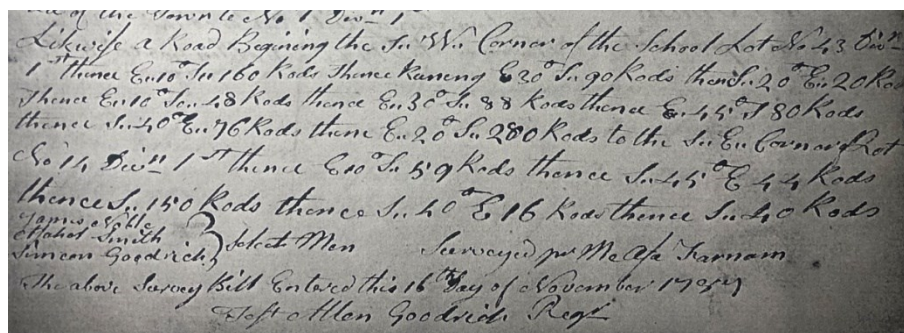


**Figure 6.** From the Land Records of Benson, Volume 1: "Likewise a road beginning at the S.W. Corner of the School Lot No. 43 Div. 1st thence E. 10° S. 160 Rods thence Running E 30° S. 90 Rods thence 20° E. 20 Rods thence E. 10° S. 28 Rods thence E. 30° S. 88 Rods thence E. 44° for 80 Rods thence S. 40° E. 76 Rods thence E. 20° S. 280 Rods to the S.E. Corner of Lot No. 14 Div. 1. thence E. 10° S. 59 Rods thence S. 45° E. 44 Rods thence S. 150 Rods thence S. 40° E. 16 Rods thence S. 40 Rods."

"{James Noble-Asahel Smith-Simeon Goodrich} Select Men" "Surveyed pr Me Asa Farnam"

"The above Survey Bill enacted this 16th Day of November 1787"<sup>50</sup>

In support of Asa Farnam's presence in the town of Benson, he is listed as one of the "first settlers" of Benson in the *Gazetteer and Business Directory of Rutland County* from 1881-82. This directory contains information of all the businesses in Rutland County, Vermont at the time as well as small histories of prominent families in each respective town of said county. "Asa Farnham, one of the first settlers of the town, and one of its first magistrates and legislators, died June 13, 1811."<sup>51</sup> Spelling of the name is disputed between sources, however for the purposes of this paper I will spell it *Farnam*, as that is how Asa himself spells it as it appears on the original survey document from 1787 in the Benson Land Records.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Hamilton Child, "Gazetteer and Business Directory of Rutland County, VT., for 1881-82," *Published by the Author, Syracuse, NY*, August 1881.

Benson's economy is laid out to be one based around mill production, contrary to my previous thinking of it being a farming town. Not only in the Directory, but also in the Town Records is the establishment of mills mentioned as being part of the economy. The Gazetteer and Directory from 1881-82 mentions the existence of at least two mills in town, one a sawmill and the other a grist and saw mill. In the town records, the proprietor's meetings mention the establishment of mills numerous times, specifically "If the said Blair his heirs or assigns shall build & erect a good saw-mill and grist-mill for the benefit of said town to be completed..."<sup>52</sup> Also, the Gazetteer mentions the town as having "still considerable timber in the town, beech, maple, pine and hemlock, interspersed with oak, ash and walnut, being most abundant," which is supported by the original plan for the 80 plots, which uses such trees as markers for determining the boundaries of plots.<sup>53</sup> Although Benson would become a town based around milling and timber, this would not occur until at least 1790 when the population began to grow, and mills could be established. For now, we are focused on Asa Farnam, the surveyor. We can get a clue of how much Asa would have been compensated for his services from the Records of Benson from the *Meeting of the Proprietors of Benson Held March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1779*. In this meeting, it is agreed upon by the proprietors that out of the 180£ 18s they would raise for the town, 68£ 16s of that would be paid to "the surver and chain-men for running out said town."<sup>54</sup> (The chainmen was the name given to people who assisted with surveying, as in 18<sup>th</sup> century surveying chain was sometimes used to distances.) While this is merely a sum and not a wage rate, it shows that the surveyor made a considerable amount of money for the job, and when equated to dollars (at least in 1786 dollars), they were paid \$229.10. I used a 1786 conversion because that is as close as a conversion as I could determine to the time of the road survey in 1787. However, if it was to be converted to 1779 dollars it would equate to over \$6,800, according to the 1872 New Hampshire Labor Statistics. While yes, the amount that was likely paid to Asa Farnem is very much higher than a ½ penny, or what the Nova Constellatio copper would have traded for, Asa is one of the only people to have roamed Benson at the time, and if the token had not belonged to him, then perhaps to another surveyor, since as previously mentioned the population did not really arrive until after the token was already taken out of circulation for the most part. To get an idea of what items cost in that day, 1785 to be exact, we can again look to the New Hampshire *Bureau of Labor Statistics* from 1872. Despite being printed and published in 1872, it has brief labor and economic statistics going back to before the Revolutionary War. Some of the common products and their prices at the time are as follows: "Wool sold for two shillings per lb.; cider, 4s. per bbl.; making a pair of boots, 8s.; tobacco, per lb., 7d..."<sup>55</sup> These commonplace provisions may very well have been consumed or purchased by Asa Farnam during his surveying of various Benson land plots and coupled with the theory that the token being most likely to have belonged to him, shows that there is a more than likely chance of the Nova Constellatio coppers as being belonging to people of Asa's class, if not used for those kinds of goods.

### Conclusion

The Nova Constellatio coppers, having originated from the efforts of Robert Morris and his associates to make a national currency, and the proposal being later rejected by Congress from Thomas Jefferson's opposition to the idea, were used as a de facto currency in the early United States in the absence of a proper United States-backed coin. The tokens not only represented the current values of Americans at the time, being Liberty and Justice, but also show the developmental

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<sup>52</sup> Records of the Town of Benson, Vol. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Campbell, op. cit.

process of our money. From the silver patterns originally proposed as being based off of Morris' units and later Jefferson's Spanish-Dollar-based denominations, to the copper strikes being found two hundred plus years later by metal detectorists such as myself, the Nova Constellatio copper lives on as a testament to our quest for a new system of denominational money and shows our economic status as a country at that time, accepting forms of payment that are not backed by any nation or power—only by the metal that they are struck on.

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## **I WAS WRONG ALL THESE YEARS! (ACTUALLY, I WAS RIGHT FOR THE WRONG REASON)**

(Ray Williams)



**Maris 56-n o/s 1787 CT M30-x.1?**

Ex Tanenbaum Americana Sale 1/25/12 lot 7592

Griffie Sale lot 92 ex Don Mituzas

As most of my friends equate me as being a NJ Copper collector, they've witnessed me post comments (in fun) at the expense of my CT Copper collecting friends. I would point out that CT Coppers were legislated to circulate at 18 to the shilling whilst NJ Coppers were legislated to circulate at 15 to the shilling. This difference in value made it very profitable to strike the lesser value CT Copper with NJ Copper dies, making it instantly worth more in commerce. That's why we find so many NJ Coppers with CT undertypes and no CT Coppers with NJ undertypes. The above math seems to prove me correct. But I was wrong! The math doesn't add up.

Over the past years, I've enjoyed many phone conversations with Randy Clark and in jest we would give reasons why our respective collecting specialties were the best. I'd like to think I won most of those discussions. I would be quick to point out that his CT Coppers were undertypes for my NJ Coppers because his were worth less. I would quickly point him to the legislations, which he had to acknowledge. Recently our fun discussions got me thinking.

The monies of account for the colonies and early states have always given me a headache. On more than one occasion I have contacted Phil Mossman to help me out. This time I decided to give it a try on my own. Although the CT and NJ legislations gave the value of their copper coins to that of a shilling, the value of a CT shilling was different from that of a NJ shilling. This involves the money of account that was in use at the time.

I located the value of a NJ shilling to a Spanish 8R and likewise for the CT shilling. After doing so, I found that the 1/15 of a NJ shilling was of equal value to 1/18 of a CT shilling using the Spanish 8R as the control in my calculations.

Math is as follows:

8R = 6 CT shillings

therefore a CT shilling =  $8 \div 6 = 1.333$  reales = 18 CT Coppers

therefore a CT Copper equals  $1.333 \div 18 = .074$  reales

8R = 7 ½ NJ shillings

therefore a NJ shilling =  $8 \div 7.5 = 1.066$  reales = 15 NJ Coppers

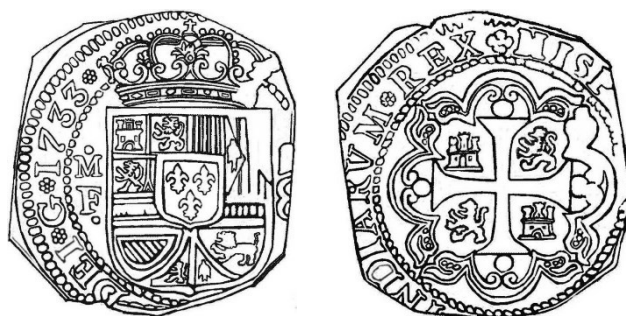
therefore a NJ Copper equals  $1.066 \div 15 = .071$  reales

Ok, if the CT and NJ coppers were of essentially equal value, why strike CT coppers with NJ dies AND why are there no CT coppers struck over NJ coins? The reason is because of both legislation and the economic climate at the time. First, the NJ coppers were legislated to be accepted in payment of taxes, which gave them a sort of legal tender status. The other state coppers did not enjoy this status. Then came the “Coppers Panic” in the late 1780s where all coppers in circulation were devalued severely over a short period of time. I’d love to see someone write an article here about the Coppers Panic years. As copper coins gradually lost value across the board, the legal tender status of NJ coppers kept their circulating value significantly higher than all others. It is this difference in value that made overstriking profitable, not the original legislated value.

Each of the colonies/states had their own “money of account”. I can explain what “money of account” is by using today’s dollar. Both Canada and the US have a dollar, BUT they are not equal in value. The same situation existed with our colonies. How would you know what the coins were worth you ask? There were almanacs and Ready Reckoners published which had charts showing coin values based on the different colonies/states. At the time of the legislations for CT & NJ coppers, the Spanish Milled Dollar (8R) was worth 6 CT shillings and 7 ½ NJ shillings.

So in conclusion, I was correct that shortly after legislation the NJ Copper was valued higher than the CT Copper, but I was correct for the wrong reason.

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18TH TO EARLY 19TH CENTURY FIGURAL DESIGN FIREMAN BUTTON RECOVERED IN BURLINGTON COUNTY, NJ

(Wayne H. Shelby & Robert J. Silverstein)

WHS: An interesting historical button came to light by an active metal detectorist (Henry Winzinger) from Burlington County, New Jersey. Henry has been metal detecting the areas of Burlington, Columbus, Eastampton, Jacksonville, Mt. Holly, and Westampton Township for approximately 25 years and has recovered many notable finds. However, on one of his many expeditions Henry recovered a large coat button not identifiable at the time due to the adhered dirt and corrosion. It appears at the end of that day's outing the button found its way into a coffee can for safekeeping. And safely it was kept for how long no one knows!

I recently had the opportunity to look through Henry's button collection and came across this interesting large-design button (32mm), shown in Figure 1. Intrigued by the motif, figural, and size, it then became apparent to further research this recovery. In doing so, I decided to contact Robert J. Silverstein, a leading historical button specialist from New Windsor, NY. Through our numerous corresponding emails, Mr. Silverstein provided a wealth of information that is documented within this article. One-piece, flat fireman buttons have been manufactured and used as far back as the late-18th century into the early-19th century.

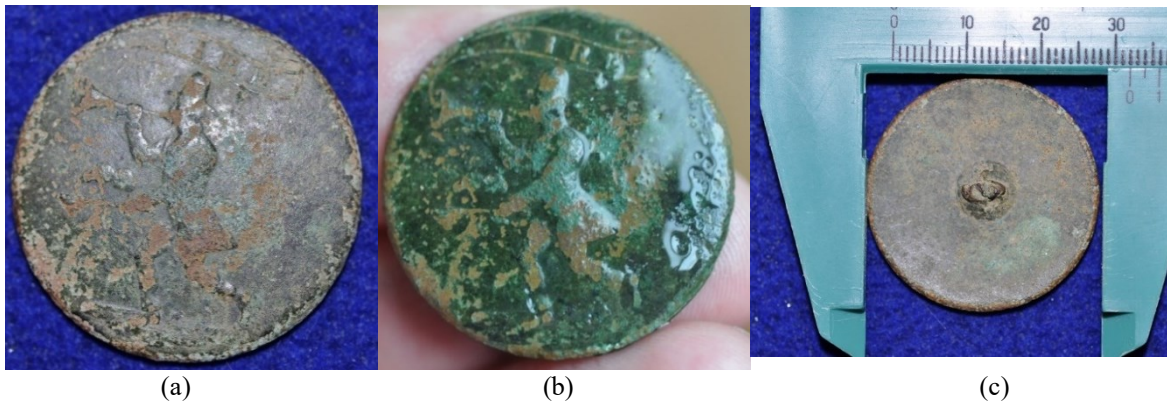


Figure 1: (a) Fireman button recovered by Henry Winzinger in Burlington County, NJ; (b) Same obverse wetted with water to reveal additional details; (c) Reverse of fireman button depicting broken & missing shank.

RJS: Fireman in the early 19th century wore very Thick and Large Coats as protection. This would require bigger sturdier buttons to hold or fasten closed strongly. If you look at insignia, it illustrates this point. Unlike a military horn, your insignia depicts an 18th Century Hunting Horn providing volume to the masses at distances. Next is the Candle burning in the pan, most probably an oil lamp of some-kind symbolizing fireman readiness in either day or night.

[Editor - RJS, referring to Figure 2, below:] This is an early 1800's Fire Insurance Protector A.K.A. Fireman button, one like it found in Charleston. Scovill made a one piece that looks like it with backmark in the 1820s. That one looks to be made in the UK, a few I have seen dug there. The one in Charleston was an imbedded shank no back mark like that one.



Figure 2: Non-dug example similar to that dug by Henry Winzinger (Pictures courtesy of Robert Silverstein).

[Editor - RJS, referring to Figure 3, below:] What I am sharing with you as far as pictures are concerned is that there is evidence of two button makers with very similar motif, but not exact. Yours is the same as the one, and the other is very similar. Meaning, at one point in time there must have been more than one manufacturer seeing money to be made by orders from different cities around the states. Not just one city or firehouse because they were found in more than one state.

It is speculation on my part from understanding early English insignia designs. The first Fire ones were 90% positive made in England with burning candle, and then American manufacture copied with oil lamp variation soon after to replace or furnish new later date orders. In my speculation, one might consider the style of the button insignia depictions... from stipples to hunting horn design, thick cuff coats and candle oil burner included.⁵⁶



Figure 3: Dug and non-dug examples showing additional variation of design. (Pictures courtesy of Robert Silverstein).

⁵⁶ Silverstein, Robert J: email correspondence July 8, 2021, at 10:32pm thru July 13, 2021, at 7:16pm and website: <https://www.georgewashingtoninauguralbuttons.com>.

WHS: Since the recovery of the fireman button occurred close to the town limits of Mt. Holly, the possibility of it being issued by the local fire company is extremely high. Mt. Holly, once known as Bridgetown, was first settled in 1677. The firehouse was established in 1752 and named Britannia Fire Company. By the time the American Revolutionary War had broken out, Bridgetown was more commonly called Mt. Holly; therefore, in 1787 the fire company decided to change their name to the Mt. Holly Fire Company. In 1805 the Mt. Holly Fire Company decided to change their name once again to the Relief Fire Company to this day. It is interesting to note this is the oldest active volunteer fire company in the nation!



Figure 4: Original Fire House (Photos by Wayne Shelby)



With the information and documentation provided above, it became apparent to Henry Winzinger and me to preserve the history of this button by donating it to the Relief Fire Company's museum along with a copy of this article after publication.

Figure 5: 86-year-old metal detectorist, Henry Winzinger with his find.



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[Editor's Note: The following is an excerpt from the Winter 2004 installation of Roger Siboni's then regular C4N feature, "Gleanings from the Internet." It recalls the considerable observational talents of the late Mike Ringo, as well as the sheer enjoyment that he brought to our hobby.]

Rats!

Mike Ringo favored our group with a photograph of his Counterfeit English Halfpenny prominently displaying a "rat" crawling up the dress of Britannia.

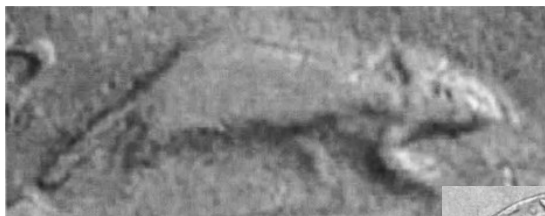


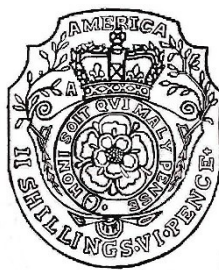
Figure 1: Representative photo of "rat."

Figure 2: Example of a "rat" crawling up Britannia - - on a counterfeit halfpence.



This is a fairly rare variety for the Counterfeit English Halfpenny series and Mike estimates that approximately three are known to exist. Mike has some old notes suggesting that a C. G. Kent first discovered this rodent variety but has no other information on Mr. Kent. If anyone recognizes this name, please contact Mike. Though the thing crawling up Britannia's dress definitely looks like a rodent to me, members of our Group alternately referred to it as a "chameleon, dachshund and mutated gila monster."

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Thank you for paying in a timely manner... It makes his job easier and will be much appreciated!

\*\*\*\*\*

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- 1) The members of the Committee shall be appointed by the C4 Board of Directors to serve for a 4-year term, which term is renewable. The number of Committee members shall be determined by the Board from time to time. The individuals engaged as distributors of C4 publications shall also be members of the Committee.
- 2) The Committee shall from among its appointed members select a Chairman every 4 years.
- 3) The C4 President and Vice President shall serve as non-voting *ad-hoc* members of the Committee, unless otherwise appointed to the committee as full members by the Board.
- 4) The Committee shall include at least one active elected Board member who shall have voting rights with regards to Committee business.
- 5) All books submitted to C4 for consideration, shall first be directed to the Chairman of the Publications Committee. All manuscripts must be submitted in a generally accepted and readily readable electronic format (e.g., Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF).
- 6) If after review, the Chairman deems the book not suitable for publication by C4, the Chairman shall inform the President and Vice President of their decision. If all parties agree, the Chairman shall inform the author accordingly.
- 7) If after review, the Chairman deems the book suitable for publication by C4, the Chairman shall inform the President and Vice President of their decision. If all parties agree, the Chairman shall inform the author accordingly, and the Chairman shall discuss with the author the general terms of C4's involvement in the publication process and obtain a verbal agreement with the author as to the general terms upon which C4 will publish the book.
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- 12) Authors must make every reasonable effort to ensure that all sources of information they include in the book are documented completely. The preferred method of citation, when feasible, shall be the use of individual footnotes and/or quotes as opposed to bibliographies and general acknowledgements. However, the last two formats can be acceptable if they are sufficiently detailed and comprehensive. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated, and if confirmed during the review and editing process may result in immediate termination of C4's involvement in bringing the book to publication.
- 13) The editors shall submit their recommendations, edits, and comments to the Chairman. The Chairman shall review the submissions and discuss them with the author. If deemed necessary, the Chairman and author may work directly with the editors to review and determine which recommended edits will be incorporated into the manuscript. Members of the Committee may also submit recommendations and comments to the Chairman, who shall review them and share them with the author as needed. Committee members shall not directly contact the author regarding such edits and comments but must work through the Chairman.
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- 15) The Chairman shall update the Board as to progress and status of the book, at minimum, during the quarterly Board conference call. Significant progress or issues that may negatively impact the book can be brought to the Board for discussion as they arise.
- 16) The Chairman may at his discretion, engage other volunteers to assist with various aspects of publication as needed, such as: documentation and verification of information sources and acknowledgments, technical requirements of the publisher as to file formats and "signature" sizes, photo format, paper type, font type and size, dust jacket versus card covers, ISBN number, etc.
- 17) Should the Committee deem it necessary to bring in outside professional assistance, e.g., book designer, dust jacket/cover design, etc., such parties shall be required to first present the Chairman with a description of services to be provided, and an estimate of cost for those services. The Chairman shall present such information to the Board for approval of C4's portion of the additional expense before formally engaging the outside professional assistance. Such additional expense shall be split 50/50 between the author and C4.
- 18) Once the editing and design process is completed, the finished electronic draft of the book shall be circulated to the full Committee for final peer review, and the Committee may approve by simple majority vote, to recommend the book to the C4 Board of Directors for final publication.
- 19) No person having a material interest (e.g., financial, co-authorship, etc.) in the book, other than the Distributors, may vote to approve or disapprove final publication of the book. The

Committee along with the author shall meet to determine the number of books to be printed, and the price for which the book will be sold. The Distributors/Sellers shall have significant input in these matters. The final decision, however, rests with the Committee and author.

- 20) The Committee shall obtain a quote to publish the book, in the quantity and specifications agreed upon by the Committee.
- 21) The Chairman shall finalize the terms of agreement between the Club and the author. Distribution of all revenues received from the sale of the book shall be in accordance with the standards listed in the DISTRIBUTION OF BOOK SALE REVENUES document. Should the author or Committee wish to change any of the terms outlined in that document, it shall be negotiated between the author and the Committee and must then be approved by a simple majority vote of the full C4 Board. The agreement between C4 and the author shall be put in writing and signed by the author and the C4 President after approval of the C4 Board.
- 22) All books accepted for publication must acknowledge C4's involvement in the form of printed acknowledgement, along with the C4 logo displayed on the dust jacket or cover spine.
- 23) Once the Committee has determined that the book is ready for publication, the Committee shall present all pertinent information, including, print run size, recommended selling price, distribution arrangements, revenue distribution agreement, etc., to the Board.
- 24) Once the Board approves, by simple majority, the Committee's recommendation and any associated agreements, the President shall be authorized enter into a contract with the publisher to print the book, and to direct the Treasurer to make all associated payments as required without further Board approvals being necessary.
- 25) Minor *ad hoc* modifications to these guidelines may be necessary depending on specifics of a given submitted work. The Chairman of the Committee shall be responsible for determining if any modifications are needed, and shall document such modifications as they may occur, and report them to the Board no later than the next scheduled Publications Committee updates.

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(1) Clark, Randy. *The Identification and Classification of Connecticut Coppers 1785-1788*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2021. Price: \$150.\*

(2) Howes, Jack, Rosen, James and Trudgen, Gary. *The History and Coinage of Machin's Mills*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2021. Price: \$85. This title also available from Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers.\*

(3) Jordan, Lou. *John Hull, The Mint, and The Economics of Massachusetts Coinage*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2002. Price: \$10.

(4) McDowell, Christopher R., *Abel Buell and the History of the Connecticut and Fugio Coinages*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2015. Price \$85.

(5) Martin, Sydney. *French Coinage Specifically for Colonial America*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2016. Price \$50.

(6) Martin, Sydney. *The Hibernia Coinage of William Wood (1722-1724,)* Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2007. Price: \$50.

(7) Martin, Sydney. *The Rosa Americana Coinage of William Wood*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2012. Price \$50.

(8) Martin, Sydney. *St. Patrick Coinage for Ireland and New Jersey*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2018. Price \$95.

(9) Moore, Roger. *The Coins of Colonial Virginia*, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, 2019, Price \$50.

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There are two indexes: one by author and a second by topic/title. This is a beginning and the index will improve over time. We have intentions of updating the index within a week or two of every issue being shipped. We ask past authors and contributors to the C4N to please review their work in the index and forward any corrections/additions/suggestions to Ray Williams at [njraywms@optonline.net](mailto:njraywms@optonline.net) or call.

\*\*\*\*\*

The American Numismatic Society lacks just 10 pieces of Continental Currency for a complete set. If you would like to donate to the study collection, please contact Curator of the Americas, Jesse Kraft, at [jkraft@numismatics.org](mailto:jkraft@numismatics.org). The missing notes are as follows:

February 26, 1777, \$2, Friedberg.55 — May 20, 1777 \$4 Friedberg.65 — May 20, 1777, \$5, Friedberg.66 — May 20, 1777, \$7, Friedberg.68 — May 20, 1777, \$8, Friedberg.69 — April 11, 1778, \$6, Friedberg.73 — April 11, 1778, \$7, Friedberg.74 — April 11, 1778, \$8, Friedberg.75 — April 11, 1778, \$20, Friedberg.76 — April 11, 1778, \$40, Friedberg.78

\*\*\*\*\*

The Daniel Frank Sedwick database of fake cobs is on ForgeryNetwork:  
<http://www.forgerynetwork.com/default.aspx?keyword=cob>

\*\*\*\*\*

## PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

In accordance with our by-laws, those who have recently joined C4 as provisional members are listed below. If any current C4 member in good standing has a reason any of the following should be denied membership in C4, please contact either your Regional VP or the President of the Club, Craig McDonald. The new provisional members are:

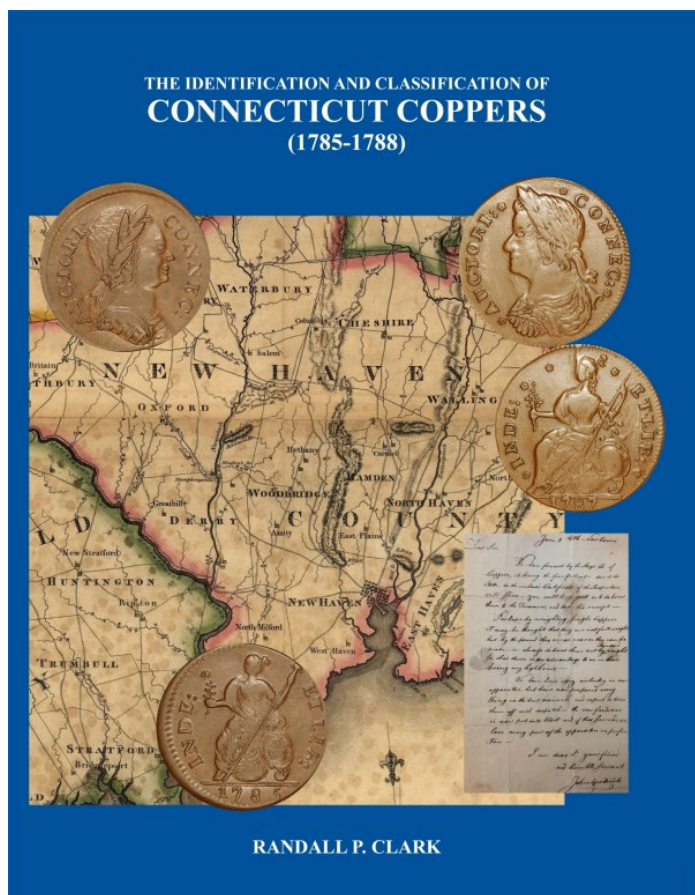
|                            |                      |                     |                        |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Don Bailey - NY            | Curt Gammer - PA     | John Olson - MD     | Dennis Tucker - GA     |
| Thomas Boytim - MD         | Chriss Hoffman - TX  | Thomas Rourke - CT  | William Van Ornum - NY |
| Philip D'Antonio, Jr. - PA | Joseph Kinney - NJ   | Steven Silber - FL  | Carl Wheatley - MD     |
| George Fernandez - NJ      | William Kraemer - NJ | Dave Steine - WI    | Carol Wolf - NJ        |
| Ralph Ford - SC            | Henry Martinka - VT  | Edward Stewart - CA |                        |

The Colonial Coin Collectors Club Announces a New Book

## THE IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF CONNECTICUT COPPERS (1785-1788)

By Randall P. Clark

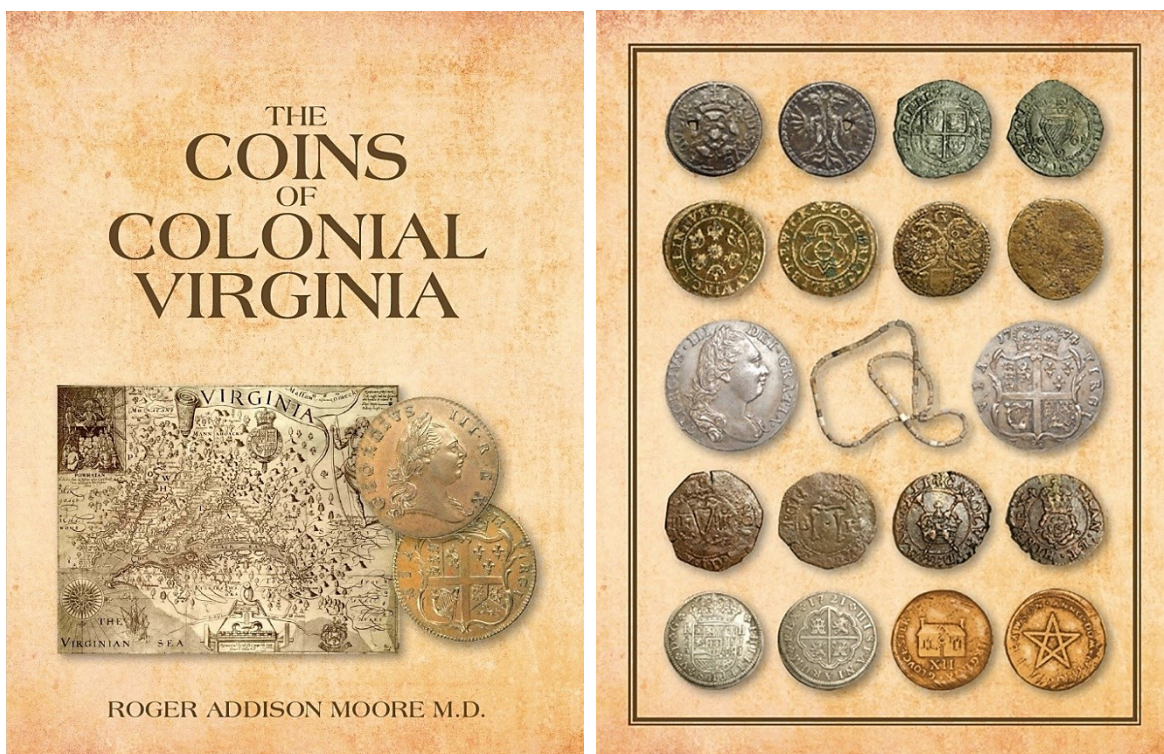
With no national coinage available in 1785, Connecticut authorized a state copper coinage for use in daily commerce to displace the large volume of counterfeit British halfpence then in circulation. Manufactured primarily in New Haven from 1785 to 1788, Connecticut coppers circulated in-state and within its major trading partners. The result was an industrial success during which an estimated five million coppers were produced and distributed years before a local banking infrastructure was established. Unauthorized out-of-state mints stamped lightweight look-alike Connecticut coppers that circulated as well. After being officially demonetized in 1804, state coppers would continue to be found in America's spare change through the mid to late 1800s, then become avidly collected by the country's early numismatists.



The *Identification and Classification of Connecticut Coppers* is the first major publication focusing on this coinage series in over 100 years. It is also the first to provide complete and enlarged photographs to aid in the recognition of each variety. Using original and published research materials, and supported by a broad base of photographic documentation, the author examines the production history of Connecticut coppers, updates the classification system for tracking coin variations, and discusses the growth of numismatic interest in collecting this early American series. Text descriptions have been updated and individual diagnostic details are emphasized and illustrated, highlighting features that differentiate the over 350 known Connecticut copper varieties.

Orders may be placed with Charles Davis Numismatic Literature ([www.vcoins.com](http://www.vcoins.com)) or Kolbe & Fanning Numismatic Booksellers ([www.numislit.com](http://www.numislit.com)).

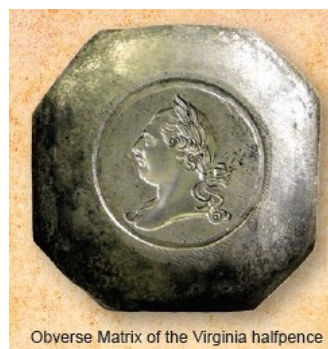
## ***C4 Proudly Announces a Book By Roger A. Moore!***



The growth and development of Virginia into one of the most important North American colonies can be traced by the economic evolution of the Dominion State as it attempted to gain the necessary hard currency needed for commerce. The history surrounding the introduction of various coinages and the use of tobacco as a commodity currency over the 150 years leading up to the final authorization of the production of Virginia halfpence in 1773 is fascinating. Equally as absorbing are the twists, turns, and dead ends encountered by the Virginia colonists as they sought authorization from the English Crown for their own coinage. It is ironic that the long-desired copper Virginia halfpence finally provided to Virginia under Warrant from King George III became available to the colonists only fifty days before the beginning of the American Revolution.

In addition to exploring the historic context in which colonial Virginia struggled to obtain hard currency, methods are provided for attributing and collecting the 30 known die varieties of the 1773 copper Virginia halfpence. The book also enumerates the specifics of the Virginia halfpence metrology, rarity, and grading, as well as their numerous forgeries, facsimiles, fantasies, and oddities. Virginia halfpence can be appreciated and collected in nearly uncirculated condition and are important additions to any collection of American colonial coins.

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Obverse Matrix of the Virginia halfpence

Price: \$95. Available beginning at the C4 Convention, November 14-17, 2019, from Charles Davis. Orders may be placed at Post Office Box 1; Wenham, MA 01984. Telephone: (978) 468 - 2933; Fax (978) 468 - 7893; E-mail: numislit@aol.com; Business Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 – 5:00 EST.

The Colonial Coin Collectors Club announces a 2nd printing:
***CONTEMPORARY COUNTERFEIT HALFPENNY AND
FARTHING FAMILIES, 2nd PRINTING***

By Roger Moore, Eugene Andrews, Robert Bowser, John Howes, John Louis, David Palmer, Jeff Rock, Rickie Rose, Clem Schettino, and Byron Weston

This monograph is the start of an effort to organize and bring structure to this area of colonial numismatics: it breaks down the vast number of different varieties into related groups called Families. A Family of contemporary counterfeits is a group of coins that likely came from the same minting operation at about the same time. Families are logical groups that share one or more of the following attributes: dies, die making punches, or similarities in the design style. This updated large format, glossy, 294-page and profusely illustrated in color hardcover is available from Barnes & Noble, Amazon books, and other mass market retailers. Check specifically for ISBN 978-1-64255-857-9.

Comments on *Contemporary Counterfeit Halfpenny and Farthing Families*:

Jim Rosen, Past President, Colonial Coin Collectors Club, Inc.:

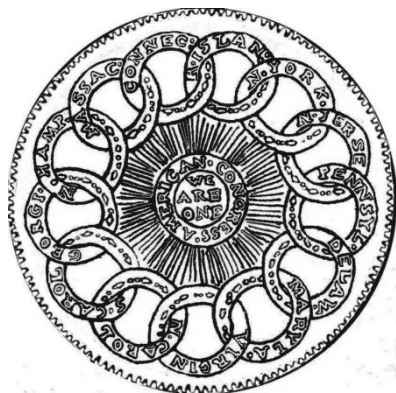
“Finally, a wonderful and badly needed reference book of extraordinary importance that for the first time begins the monumental task of putting order to the unorganized field of counterfeit halfpence and farthings.”

**Contemporary Counterfeit
Halfpenny & Farthing Families**

By Roger Moore, Eugene Andrews, Robert Bowser, John Howes, John Louis,
David Palmer, Jeff Rock, Rickie Rose, Clem Schettino, and Byron Weston



This book is the start of an effort to organize and bring structure to this area of colonial numismatics.



CLASSIFIED ADS

Effective starting with the Winter 2021 issue, there is no longer a price difference for color ads.

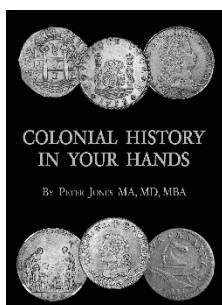
| | 1 issue | 2 issues | 3 issues | 4 issues | Copy Size |
|------------|---------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Cover page | \$550 | \$800 | \$1,050 | \$1,300 | 6" x 9" |
| 1 page | \$300 | \$450 | \$600 | \$750 | 6" x 9" |
| 1/2 page | \$175 | \$250 | \$325 | \$400 | 6" x 4.5" |

Please send check with your ad to Treasurer, Charlie Rohrer, when placing your ad. We accept camera-ready copy or any Microsoft Word compatible computer file.

All members also have the right to include a free classified ad in the newsletter of up to 10 lines of **text only**.

NOTICE: The Colonial Coin Collectors Club does not review the ads provided for accuracy, nor does it assess any items offered for sale relative to authenticity, correct descriptions, or the like. C4 is not to be considered a party to any transactions occurring between members based on such ads and will in no way be responsible to either the buyer or seller.

EDITOR NOTE: Starting with the Winter 2021 issue, Classified Ads that have run for four consecutive issues will be discontinued unless instructed otherwise by the advertiser.



A textbook of colonial American coinage, by Peter Jones, MA, MD, MBA. 597 letter size pages, including almost 300 full page color photographs of colonial coins. Hardback with 1,900-word index. Profusely illustrated. Contents include: Classification, glossary, metrology. **British Royal authorized:** Baltimore, Holt, Rosa, Hibernia, Regal, VA. **French Royal only for colonies:** Gloriam Regni, 9 denier, stampees, Cayenne **French Royal domestic export for colonies:** mousquetaires, sous marqués John Law, Chameau, **Locally made tokens:** MA silver, Higleys, MD silver, **Imported tokens:** Newby, Voce Populi, Pitt, RI Ship, **State copper coinage. Proposed & actual federal Optional:** Washingtonia, Condor, Commodity money Trade Coins, Coins which should not be in Red Book, Little used pieces, 1776 Journals of Continental Congress. **Visit: [store.bookbaby](http://store.bookbaby.com)—> colonial history. Apply code SIXTYOFF - Net price \$89.**



New Fixed Price List from Eugene T Yotka Rare Coins. This fully illustrated catalog contains a nice selection of New Jersey Coppers, some beautiful Connecticut Coppers, Massachusetts, and Vermont, as well as Colonial Currency and Numismatic Literature and much more. To order yours today simply email your request to etrarecoins@gmail.com or call us at 321-759-5760 and we will email your copy right away.

* * * * *

1787 M 38-L.2 R4 CC? AUCIORI PCGS VF35 373.35/08508567 - 5/30,6/1/2012 Long Beach - \$910. ** 1787 M48-G.5 R5+ CC? PCGS VF30 370.30/33032094 - \$485. ** 1786 M 5.1-H.1 R6 133.4 gns XXXs Rev, Clip obv. - blue 2x2 w coin+Craige Env. Stacks 6/13 #45 - \$ 1075. ** 1787 M 36- L.1 R5+ 139.6 gns Obv Hi Check Stria - Rev Some Spotting - Craige Env from Cyril Howley, Stacks 6/2013 #97 - 3x3 clear auction flip - \$220 ** 1787 M37.13-HH R5 Stacks 1/13 #11249 - blue 2x2 w/coin + TED CRAIGE / STACKS 12/14/63 ENV - \$215 ** 1787 M38-GG AUCIORI R4 - blue 2x2 wcoin + TED CRAIGE Env, Stacks 1/2013 #11252 - \$220 ** Raw M 32.4 - X.5 - dark, double clip, rot. rev. - dateless - off center - R5+ - 106.3gns. - \$200 ** RAW M 26-KK 1 - ET LIB -- R5 LDS Rev - \$175 ** Raw M32.5-aa INDE/FUDE - R4 - 10-11 O/C CLIP - \$145 ** Raw M31.1-gg.1 - ET LIR R3 - Fine - \$165
Rich Nadeau; 1 Lisa Ave; Raymond, NH 03077. Email: NPJR2@earthlink.net. Ph: 603-244-2500 (Up to 8 PM Eastern Time only)

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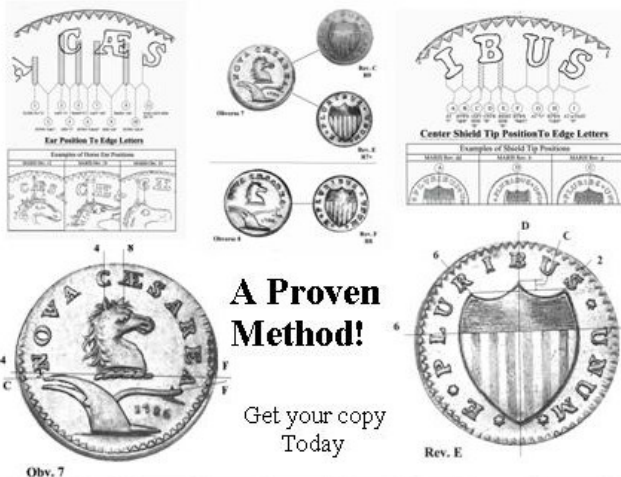
## TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS

**All New Second Edition** by Michael Demling

### NEW JERSEY COPPERS

Comprehensive Analysis and Attribution Guide of New Jersey Coppers

All you copper collectors have been asking for my NJ colonial coppers guide. Well here it is! Newly written 333 pages packed with updated information new varieties, and large updated photos Also new chapters on copies and counterfeits, condition censuses by Jersey specialist Michael Wierzbza, and The Galloping Jerseys by metal detectorist Don Hartman. ~~~~~Plus much much more.~~~~~



**New QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE** by Michael Demling

### NEW JERSEY COPPERS

Quick Reference New Jersey Coppers Obverse / Reverse Guide

A special reduced size 6x8 128 page Quick Reference Guide has been developed to provide the collector with a small portable guide to attribute Jersey Coppers. All attribution methods are included, with Obverse / Reverse and Reverse / Obverse die marriage charts for all varieties. Mapping points shown on Obverses and Reverses. Makes attribution of New Jersey Coppers quick and easy. Also up-dated Ranty ratings on all varieties. With a New Jersey Copper Check list of all varieties in the Guide to keep track of your collection showing date purchased, Grade, Cost, Purchased from, and Remarks.

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