

# **DRAWING COLONIAL-ERA COINS IN ORDER TO FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE B.S.A. COIN COLLECTING MERIT BADGE**

## **REQUIREMENT No. 10-d**

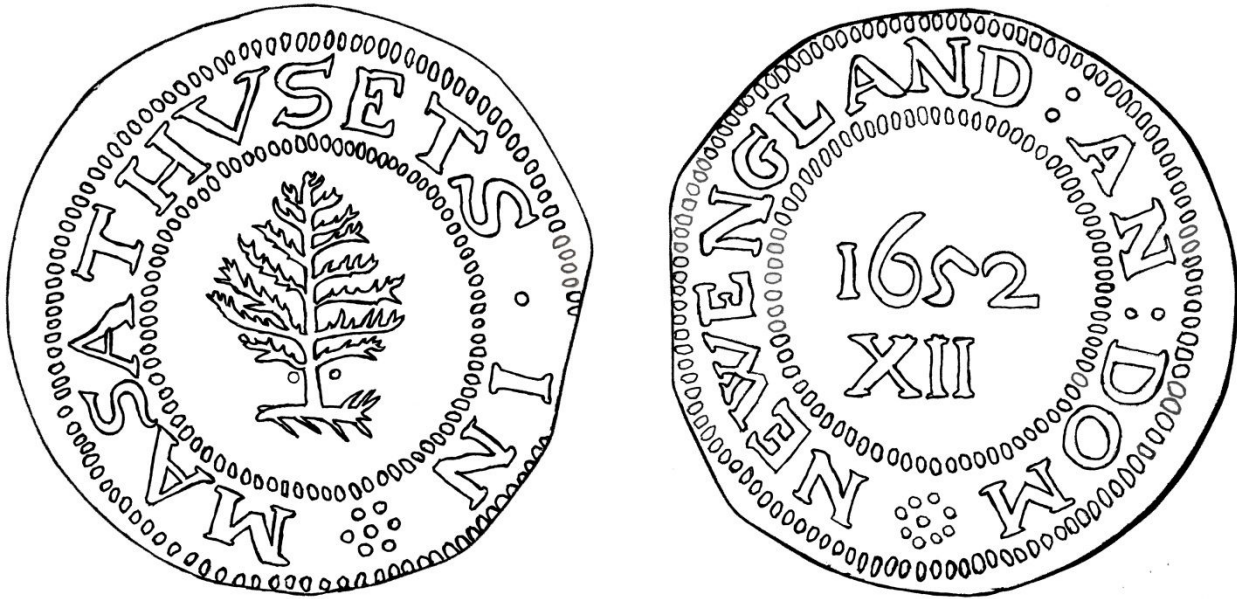
This page is designed to assist scouts wishing to fulfill requirement 10-d, of the Coin Collecting Merit Badge by drawing 5 colonial-era U.S. coins. This site provides images and drawings of selected coins for scouts to consider in preparing their own drawings. In addition to these basic items, a brief description of each coin is provided for those scouts who wish to learn more about the coin.

At the outset, we must note some ambiguity in requirement 10-d. Coin collectors generally consider certain coins to be “colonial” even though they were technically minted after the Revolutionary War, which ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris of 1783 and its subsequent ratification by Congress in January 1784. You should consult with your merit badge counselor before drawing any coin minted after 1783. This site presents 9 coins to choose from, the first 6 of which are clearly within the “Colonial Era” by anyone’s definition, the last three coins were struck between 1784 and 1787 – you need only draw 5 coins. Talk with your counselor before drawing any coin struck after 1783.

This page was prepared by Christopher R. McDowell, Coin Collecting Merit Badge Counselor for B.S.A. Dan Beard Council, Blue Jacket District, Cincinnati, Ohio, with the help of the officers and members of the Colonial Coin Collectors Club (“C4”) and friends of colonial coin collecting.

Any scout who completes the Coin Collecting Merit Badge by drawing 5 of the coins shown on this site may receive a free one-year membership to C4 by contacting Mr. McDowell at [crmcowell@strausstroy.com](mailto:crmcowell@strausstroy.com) and submitting his drawings. It is requested that you copy a parent or guardian on any communication you send to Mr. McDowell.

We hope this site is helpful and welcome feedback from scouts or merit badge counselors on ways we can improve it.

**PINE TREE SHILLINGS (1667-1682)**

(Images of Drawing Courtesy of Will Nipper)



(Image Courtesy of the American Numismatic Society)

**PINE TREE SHILLING DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION**

A brief description of The Pine Tree Shilling is provided on page 26 of your Merit Badge Book. The English did not permit the American Colonies to mint their own coins, however, after King Charles I of England was executed, there was no king on the throne and England's ability to enforce laws in its far-flung colonies was minimal. The Massachusetts Bay Colony had been largely drained of silver coinage and what limited coinage could be found came from pirates or was made in Spain, Mexico, or South America; thus, in 1652, the Colony authorized John Hull

and Robert Sanderson to fashion what silver there was into disks for coins. The first coins were very crude round silver pieces stamped on one side with “NE” for New England and on the other side with a Roman numeral for the value of the coin. An image of the obverse of this coin can be found on p. 26 of your Merit Badge Book. These coins were easy to counterfeit and even easier to clip (a process by which a small amount of silver is trimmed from the edge of a coin, the person doing the clipping would then try to pass the clipped coin off at full value and retain the small clipped portion as profit). These problems were solved somewhat in 1653 with a design change that incorporated a tree and words that took up the entire coin’s surface. Coins struck from 1653 to 1660 that used a new design type were all dated 1652 and are known as “Willow Tree” coinage. In 1660, Mr. Hull was able to procure better equipment, and the quality and design of the coins were both greatly improved. Coins made between 1660 and 1667 are known as “Oak Tree” and featured a tree with much more distinct branches. The coin in the image above is known as a “Pine Tree Shilling.” Even though these coins were struck between 1667 and 1682 they are all dated 1652. A possible explanation for the 1652 date is that by 1660 the king was restored to the throne in England and the new king, Charles II, the son of the executed king, was consolidating his power and punishing those who opposed him and who aided in his father’s death. By placing the year 1652 on its coins, the Massachusetts Bay Colony may have hoped to continue to get away with the fact it was violating the law that prevented it from minting its own coins by making it appear as if the coins were minted in 1652, a time when there was no king on the throne.

These are the first coins made in what would become America and are an important part of our numismatic heritage. The tree in the center of the Pine Tree coin’s obverse was not a whimsical choice but depicts the tree shown on the Massachusetts Bay Colony flag, a pine tree. Around the tree are the words “MASATHVSETS · IN”. The date “1652” appears in the center of the reverse, below the date are the Roman numerals “XII,” which means 12 and stands for the denomination or amount of the coin, 12 pence, which equals 1 shilling. Around the edge of the reverse are the words “NEW ENGLAND” and “AN : DOM” which is an abbreviation of the Latin phrase “annō Domini” which means “in the year of the Lord.” The NE, Willow, Oak, and Pine Tree coins were made in denominations of 3 pence, 6 pence, and 12 pence (shilling) – with the Oak Tree series also containing a 2 pence piece.

#2

MARYLAND (LORD BALTIMORE) COINAGE (1659)



(Images of Drawing Courtesy of Will Nipper)



(Images of 12 pence/1 shilling coin Courtesy of Syd Martin)

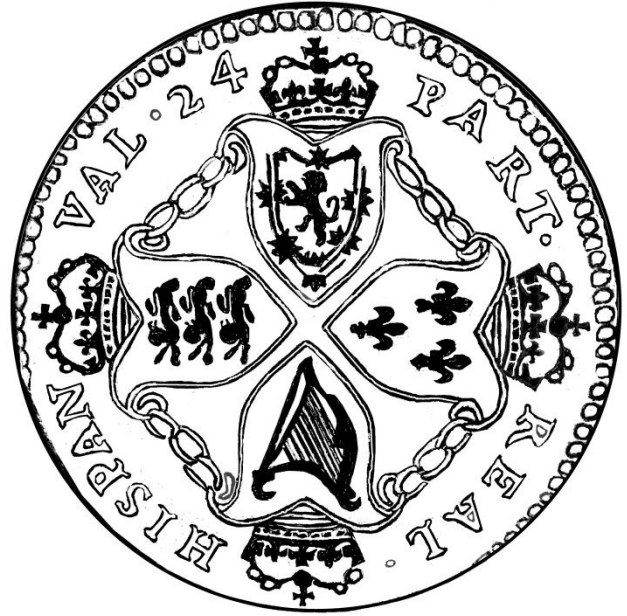


(Images of 6 pence coin Courtesy of Q. David Bowers)

## LORD BALTIMORE COINAGE DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION

In 1632, Cecil Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore, received a land grant from King Charles I of England for a new colony to be named after the queen, Mary; it was originally called "Terra Maria," or Maryland. When Charles I lost his head, literally, in 1649, Calvert lost his royal patron and control of the province. In 1657, Calvert was able to regain control of Maryland. During this period, Maryland's main crop and medium of exchange was tobacco. Debts were paid and goods purchased with tobacco leaves, which acted like money. A problem with having a crop like tobacco as the primary medium of exchange is that prices can fluctuate wildly depending on the harvest, which is just what happened in Maryland. Complaints reached Calvert who was determined to help the situation and make a profit by creating a silver coin to circulate in his colony. The idea was that people would turn in tobacco leaves and receive the coins, but at an exchange rate that would make Calvert a nice profit. The coins were most likely made in the famous Tower of London mint in 1659 to be shipped to the colony; however, political conditions in Maryland prevented the necessary legislation to accept the coins in the colony from passing and it was not until 1662 that a law was passed requiring each head of household to turn in 60 lbs. of tobacco for 10 shillings worth of the new coins. By this time, the price of tobacco had dropped and Lord Baltimore actually lost money on the exchange.

Lord Baltimore coins were minted in silver in denominations of four, six, and twelve pence. There was also a pattern produced for a copper penny, called a denarium, but it was never put into production. The obverse of the coins depicted the bust of Lord Calvert, with the legend + CAECILIVS : DNS: TERRAE - MARIAE : & CT . on the shilling (with the final T left off the smaller sized denominations). In this phrase the DNS stands for DOMINUS and the "&" sign for the Latin "et" which, when combined with the c, gives us the abbreviation etc. (with ct we get the full et cetera); thus the legend reads, "Cecil, Lord of Maryland etc." The reverse of the silver denominations displayed the family shield with a palatine coronet above and the denomination in roman numerals to either side of the shield (either X II, V I or I V) and the legend CRESCITE : ET : MVLTIPPLICAMINI . (Increase and be multiplied). The reverse of the copper denarium pattern had a palatine coronet with two pennants and the legend + DENARIVM : TERRAE - MARIAE (Denarium of Maryland). The use of the cross in the legends is a religious symbol, the Calvert family was Roman Catholic and the Roman Catholic faith was practiced in Maryland.



(Images of Drawing Courtesy of Will Nipper)



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

(Images Courtesy of Heritage Numismatic Auctions, Inc.)

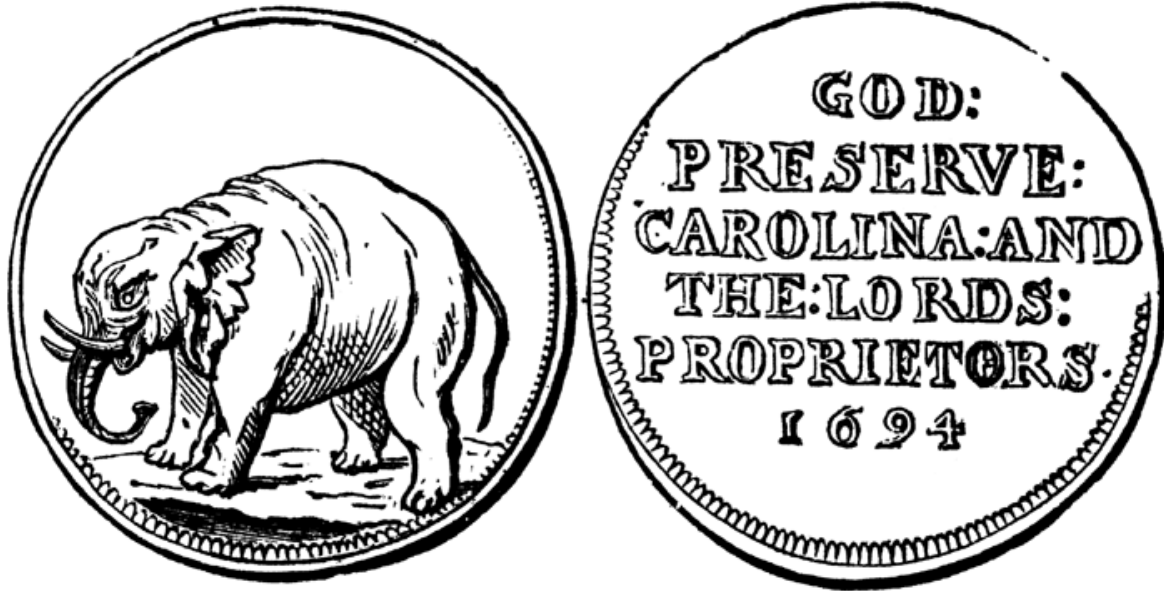
### AMERICAN PLANTATION COINAGE DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION

These coins were struck in nearly pure tin, not silver or copper, and were the first royally authorized coinage for the British colonies in America. Tin is an unusual metal to make coins from and it should come as little surprise that the English tin industry was largely behind the manufacture of these coins. Tin does not stand up to the elements well and many of these coins today show signs of oxidation, which has obliterated the design. Nice coins are rare and expensive.

In 1688, Richard Holt, acting as agent for a number of tin mine owners convinced the King to permit these coins to be struck for use in America. Previously, the industry convinced royal authorities to manufacture several denominations of English coins in tin. Interestingly, Plantation coins are not denominated in English pence, but state the value is 1/24 of a Spanish real. This was done because Spanish money was common in the American colonies and it was thought that a value stated in Spanish money would make them more acceptable.

The obverse of the coin shows King James II on horseback with the legend, "IACOBVS . II . D G . MAG . BRI . FRAN . ET . HIB . REX" meaning James II by the grace of God King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. On the reverse are the 4 crowned shields of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland linked together with a chain and the legend "VAL . 24 PART . REAL . HISPAN" meaning Value a 24<sup>th</sup> Part of a Spanish Real. Although the coin proclaims James II to be king of these dominions, he abdicated the throne in December 1688, shortly after the coinage was produced. Soon thereafter, William of Orange and his wife, Mary, were proclaimed King and Queen. As a result, these coins would not have circulated in great numbers.

## ELEPHANT HALFPENCE (1666-1694)



(Images of drawings Courtesy of Jeff Rock)



(Images Courtesy of Q. David Bowers)

## ELEPHANT TOKEN DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION

The origin of the Elephant token is unknown and almost everything about them is debated. It has been conjectured they were first minted soon after the great London fire of 1666 because the motto on the reverse of some of them reads, GOD PRESERVE LONDON. However, there is no evidence to substantiate this claim. More likely the motto is simply a general petition for divine grace. There are several



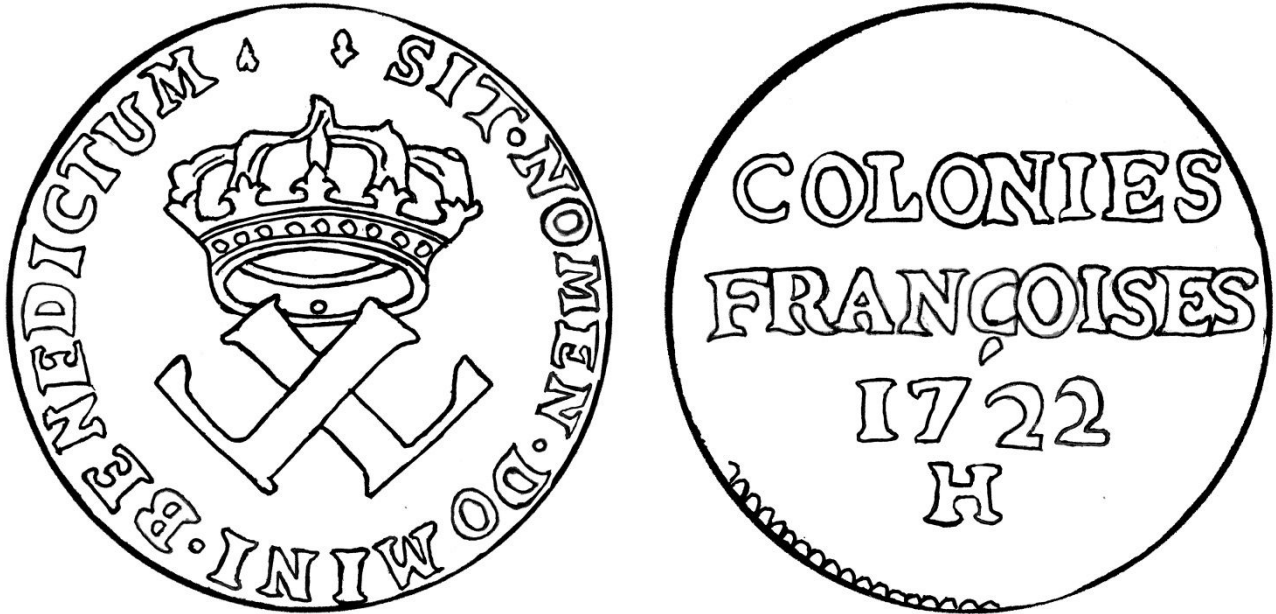
different types of Elephant tokens with different wording on the reverse and slightly different looking or positioned elephants on the obverse.

All Elephant tokens have an obverse depicting a large tusked elephant. There are seven varieties of Elephant tokens. Four have a reverse displaying the shield of the city of London (consisting of a cross with a sword that is usually in the upper left quadrant) and a motto that mentions London, and thus are called the "London elephant tokens." Three of these London varieties have the reverse motto GOD PRESERVE LONDON. The final London Elephant has the standard shield without diagonals but only has the one word motto LONDON.

Three rare Elephant varieties exist with the elephant obverse but with reverses that simply carry a motto and the date 1694, hence they have been called the 1694 Elephants. One of the 1694 Elephant varieties has the reverse motto GOD PRESERVE CAROLINA AND THE LORDS PROPRIETERS 1694. A second version of this variety was issued correcting the misspelling (TERS for TORS) in proprietors to: GOD PRESERVE CAROLINA AND THE LORDS PROPRIETORS 1694. The final variety is very rare, with only three examples known, and carries the reverse motto, GOD PRESERVE NEW ENGLAND 1694.

The Elephant tokens were designed at the Tower mint in London for use in England, with the Carolina and New England tokens evidently serving as promotional pieces to increase interest in the colonies. It appears the tokens were neither made for nor intended for circulation in the American colonies. Nonetheless, it is believed that these tokens were unofficially brought to the colonies in limited quantities and used in commerce here. Elephant tokens are collected by American coin collectors because of the wording connecting them to the Carolina colonies and New England and because they have been found, albeit in limited quantities, in old non-collector accumulations of coins in New York and New Jersey areas, indicating they passed here as halfpence when any copper coin of suitable size was accepted in commerce.

The coin depicted in the drawing is of a Carolina Elephant Token, struck in 1694. The image is also of a Carolina Elephant Token struck in 1694. The drawing is of a coin struck after the photographed coin – how do we know this? If you look at the reverse you will see the spelling of the word “Proprietors” is correct in the drawing and incorrect in the photographed coin – realizing their mistake the coiners punched an O over the E in the die.



(Images of Drawing Courtesy of Will Nipper)



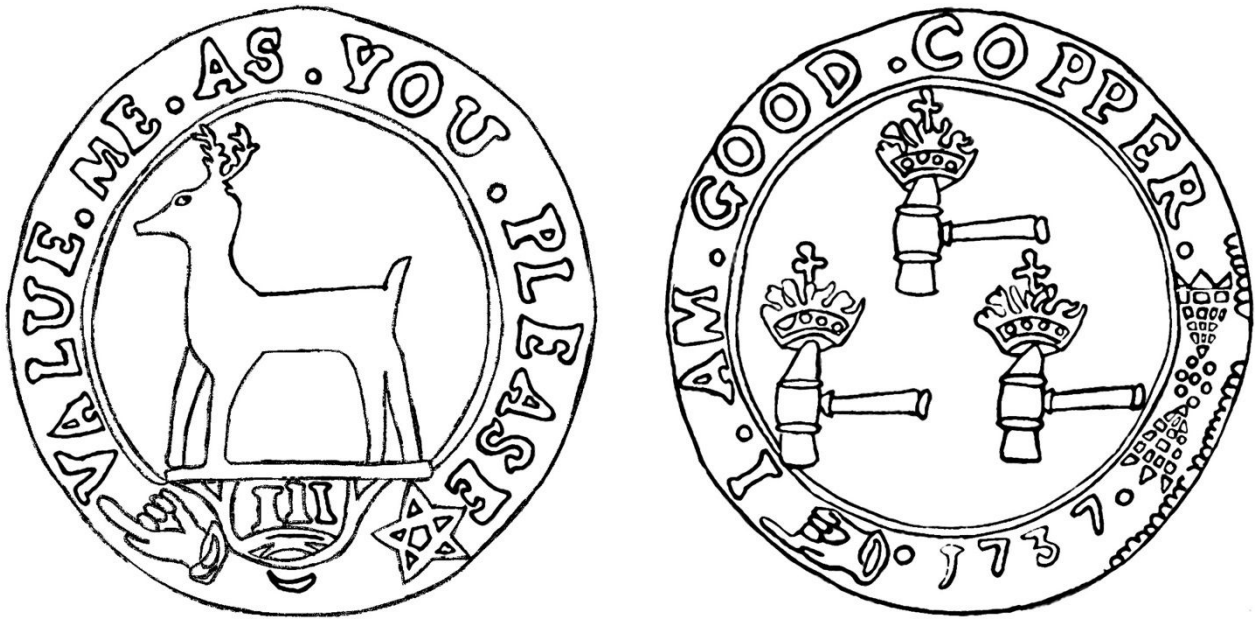
(Images of 9-Denier Courtesy Jack Howes)

### 9-DENIER DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION

Many Americans fail to realize that much of what is today the United States was, until 1763, under the control of France. New France as it was called extended from west of the Appalachians to the Mississippi River and from New Orleans into what is today Canada – a huge territory. These French colonists needed money with which to conduct business just like their English counterparts in New England. Starting in 1721 and extending into 1722 the French

government struck copper coins with a value of 9-deniers for the people of New France. These coins were struck at two mints, one in Rouen (with a “B” mintmark) and the other in Le Rochelle, France (with an “H” mintmark). A great number of these coins were struck and transported to France’s North American colonies where they remained in circulation for many decades. The obverse of the 9-denier has the monogram of King Louis XV – crossed “L”s below the French royal crown. This is surrounded by the legend “SIT NOMEN DOMINI BENEDICTUM”, meaning “blessed be the name of the Lord.” The reverse identifies that the coins were being issued for the French colonies, provides the date of coining, and the mintmark. Those coins minted in Rouen contain symbols that identify the mint master and chief engraver at either side of the date.

HIGLEY COPPERS (1737-1739)



(Image of Drawing Courtesy of Will Nipper)



(Images Courtesy of Heritage Numismatic Auctions, Inc.)

**HIGLEY COPPER DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION**

These coppers are named after Dr. Samuel Higley (c. 1687-1737) who was a graduate of Yale College and a schoolmaster before becoming a surgeon. Later, Dr. Higley abandoned these

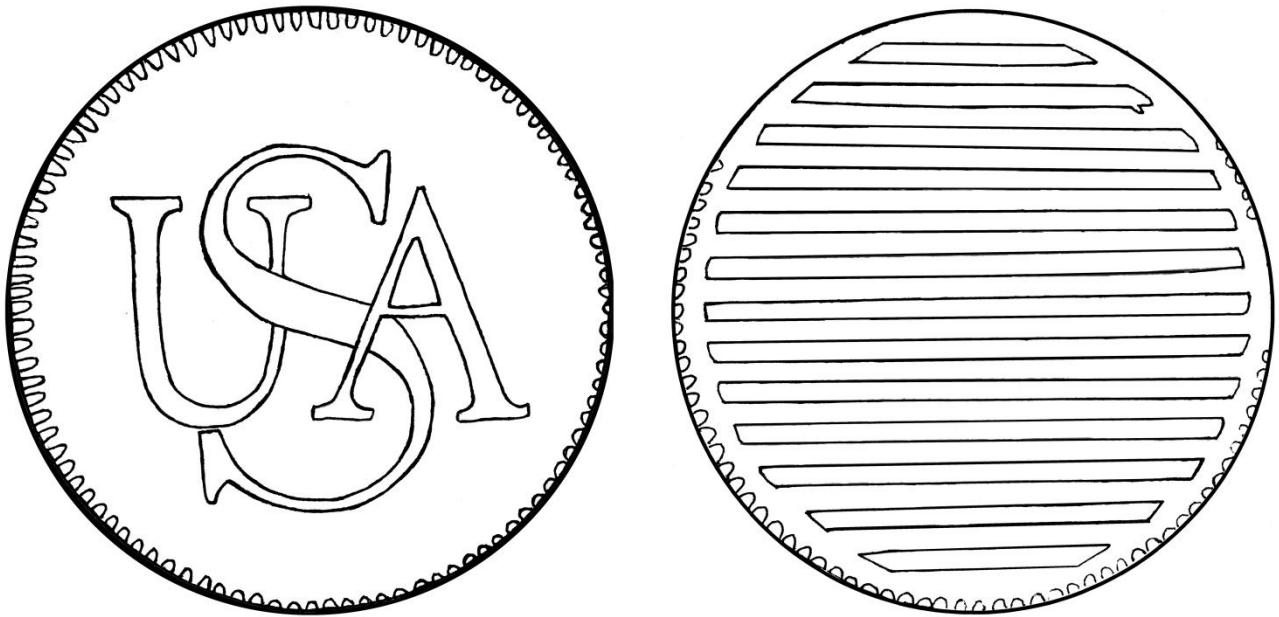
pursuits to become a metallurgical pioneer making what is believed to be the first steel in what would later become the United States of America. In 1727, Dr. Higley purchased land in Simsbury, Connecticut, that contained large quantities of copper ore, which he exported to England. In 1737, Dr. Higley combined his knowledge of steel and his copper holdings to make dies from which he began striking coins. In May of that year Dr. Higley was aboard a ship transporting his valuable copper to England when the ship and crew were lost at sea. After his death, it is believed that his family continued to make these coins until 1739.

There are several different types of Higley coppers made from different dies containing alternate images and mottos. In total there are seven obverse and four reverse dies. All are rare today. The drawing is of a 1737, 3 Hammer, I AM GOOD COPPER variety, and the photo is of a 3 Hammer, CONNECTICVT variety. If you look closely you will notice differences in the obverse of the two coins as well.

Higley's copper mine was operated until the 1750s. During the Revolutionary War, political prisoners, those citizens loyal to the crown, were kept in the old tunnels. In 1773, the mine was made into a prison called Newgate. Considered costly to run and inhumane, the prison was finally closed in 1827. Crumbling buildings from the old prison still stand today.

#7

## BAR COPPERS (c. 1785)



(Image of Drawing of Bar Copper Courtesy of Will Nipper)



(Image of Bar Copper Courtesy of Q. David Bowers)

### BAR COPPER DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION

Bar coppers were fashioned after buttons worn on Revolutionary War soldiers' uniforms. Although "USA" appears on the obverse, they were most likely manufactured in Birmingham, England, and shipped to a New York City merchant who introduced them into the stream of commerce. Bar Coppers are very simple with just the letters USA on the obverse surrounded by a jagged outside border and thirteen bars on the reverse, each bar representing one of the 13

original colonies. At the time they were brought to America around 1785, they were significantly underweight compared to authorized coppers coins; thus, the American merchant who ordered them from England probably made a handsome profit. Because the United States Mint did not produce significant amounts of coins until 1793, there was a great need for coins of any kind after the Revolutionary War. Indeed, the need for coins was so great that people were willing to accept tokens, like Bar Coppers, from merchants instead of authorized coins issued from a government mint. No doubt, the design of these tokens was intended to appeal to patriotic Americans and make them more acceptable in commerce. At the same time, the simplicity of the design and popularity of these tokens has resulted in many modern counterfeits made to fool collectors.

**WARNING:** Bar Copper were manufactured after the American Colonial period, i.e., after the Revolutionary War, but before the U.S. Constitution was adopted. Bar Coppers are collected as colonial coins by members of the Colonial Coin Collectors Club (C4); however, you should ask your merit badge counselor's permission before drawing this coin to make sure he considered it a "Colonial Coin" for purposes of Requirement 10-d.

REPUBLIC OF VERMONT COPPERS (1785-1789)

Vermont Landscape Copper (1785-6)



(Images of Drawing of Bar Copper Courtesy of Will Nipper)



(Images of Landscape Copper Courtesy of Q. David Bowers)

**VERMONT COPPERS DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION**

Vermont was not one of the original 13 colonies and at the close of the Revolution was an independent republic that desperately wanted to join the Union. In 1785, Vermont became the first “state” to issue its own coinage. Reuben Harmon, Jr. petitioned the Vermont legislature for the right to mint copper coins, giving a percentage of his production to Vermont as a tax in

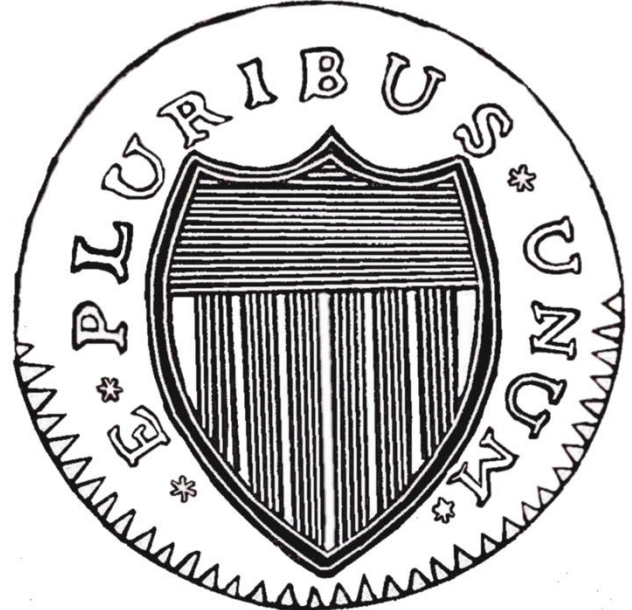


exchange for the privilege. His petition was granted on June 15, 1785 and a mint established in Harmon's hometown of Rupert, Vermont. Because he did not have the skills needed to create coining dies, Harmon hired two New York City silversmiths, William Coley and Daniel Van Voorhis, to assist him. In 1787, Harmon, Coley, and Van Voorhis, joined with Thomas Machin to open a second mint in New York State and struck some additional Vermont coins there. The coins are dated from 1785 to 1788, but it is believed that some coins were struck as late as 1789, but used old dies with an earlier date.

The 1785-6 Vermont landscape coinage is considered by many to be one of the most beautiful and interesting pre-federal coins, which is one of the reasons it appears as part of the logo for the Colonial Coin Collectors Club. An examination of the coin shows that it is, in part, an advertisement for Vermont to join the Union as the 14<sup>th</sup> state. The landscape image was unfortunately discontinued halfway through 1786 in favor of a coin that looked similar to the coins produced by Connecticut and copper coins issued by England. The coin photographed here is a 1786 Vermont landscape copper and the drawing is of the earlier 1785 version. The obverse of the coin shows the sun peeking out over Vermont's Green Mountains with pointed rays of sunshine, below is a plow in honor of the men and women who were clearing the land for cultivation, while below the plow is the date "1786" with the words "VERMONTENSIVM RES PUBLICA" which is Latin for "The Republic of Vermont" or more literally "[By the authority of the] the people who live in the Green Mountains." The Latin words on the 1786 coin are different from what appeared on the coin in 1785 as it is more grammatically correct – can you see the difference between the wording in the drawing versus the photograph? The reverse of the coin features the all seeing eye of God in the center with the Latin words "STELLA QUARTA DECIMA" meaning "The Fourteenth Star" – an advertisement that the Republic of Vermont wished to become the 14<sup>th</sup> star in America's flag, something that would not happen until 1791.

**WARNING:** Vermont coppers were minted from 1785 to 1788, after the American Revolutionary War, but before the U.S. Constitution was adopted. Vermont landscape coppers are collected as colonial coins by members of the Colonial Coin Collectors Club (C4); however, you should ask your merit badge counselor's permission before drawing this coin to make sure he considered it a "Colonial Coin" for purposes of Requirement 10-d.

## NEW JERSEY COPPERS (1786-1788)



(Images of Drawing Courtesy of Will Nipper)



(Images Courtesy of John L. "Jack" Howes)

**NEW JERSEY COPPER DESCRIPTION AND INFORMATION**

On June 1, 1786, the New Jersey legislature granted a coining privilege to Walter Mould, Thomas Goadsby, and Albion Cox. The men were permitted to strike 3 million copper coins, which they began to do in Rahway, New Jersey in a mill they leased for that purpose. Soon after operations began, there was a falling out between the partners and Goadsby and Cox were given

the right to mint  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the coins and Mould the remaining  $\frac{1}{3}$ , which he did at Morristown, New Jersey. Later, the Rahway equipment was moved to Elizabethtown.

The obverse of the coins shows the truncated head of a horse facing to the right (although on a few varieties it faces to the left), with a plow below, and the inscription “NOVA CAESAREA” or “New Jersey,” from the Latin for the Isle of Caesar, which over time was anglicized to Jersey or in our case New Jersey. The date appears near the bottom rim on the obverse. The reverse displays a shield in the center with “E PLURIBUS UNUM” surrounding it, this Latin phrase adopted by the national Congress in 1782 as our national motto, means “Out of many, one.” Because New Jersey coppers were manufactured in such great numbers and in several locations, many different dies were used. Each obverse and reverse die was hand-made; thus, there were differences between the dies – some differences are small and other are very obvious. While a set of dies may have struck thousands of coins before failing, other dies had a shorter life -- resulting in rarities today. Serious collectors of the series acquire New Jersey coppers based on die varieties, but there are many ways to collect them. Some New Jersey coins have interesting nicknames, like Camel, Deer, Frightened, and Serpent Head and one 1788 variety includes the image of a small running animal in the reverse legend and is known as the “Running Fox” variety.

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