



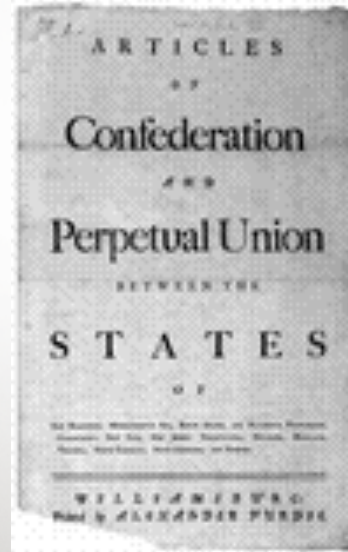
# CONNECTICUT COPPERS

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*CONA May 15, 2013*

# WHEN?

- ❖ The Articles of Confederation, ratified in 1781, authorized the states to create coinage.



CONNECTICUT COPPERS WERE DATED FROM  
1785 – 1788 AND STRUCK FROM 1785 – 1789.



❖ The Copper Panic of 1789 put an end to state coppers, and the Constitution reserved striking coins for the federal government. Machin's Connecticut coppers were struck after the Constitution took effect on June 21 of 1789.

# WHY?

- ❖ October 18, 1785 - Samuel Bishop, James Hillhouse, John Goodrich, and Joseph Hopkins petitioned the Connecticut legislature for the privilege of coining coppers.
- ❖ ...That there is a great & very prevalent scarcity of small Change in this State, in consequence whereof great inconveniences are severely felt by all orders of men in the Articles of Change, especially by the laborious Class... :...our late Enemies conscious of this, & unrestrained by any Law, are countirfeiting (sic) in vast abundance, that others even of our Countrymen,... have attempted the same nefarious Business, and are now Coining & stamping a Copper Coin much under the standard weight and Endeavouring (sic) to Impose the same upon the Inhabitants of this State manifestly to the injury of the Credit of our Copper Currency and to the great Damage, in point of fraud and imposition, of the honest & unsuspecting Citizens of this State.
- ❖ October 20, 1785 – The law was passed.

# WHO?

- ❖ Other partners were taken on including the die maker Abel Buell (1742 – 1822).



His punishment consisted of imprisonment, cropping, and branding. The tip of his ear only was cut off, held on the tongue, and replaced, where it grew on. He was branded on the forehead, so high up that the hair afterward covered the scar. But the hot iron was held on long enough to say, "God save the King."

# WHAT – THE TOPOGRAPHY OF A CONNECTICUT COPPER

Man's Head



AVCTORI CONNEC  
Authority of Connecticut

Emblem of Liberty with Olive Branch



INDE ET LIB: 1785  
Independence and Liberty

Coppers, not half cents or cents, these coins did not have legal tender status. There were to weigh six pennyweight (144 grains – 480 grains per Troy ounce) and had varying values throughout their use, typically 18 to the shilling.

# WHERE?

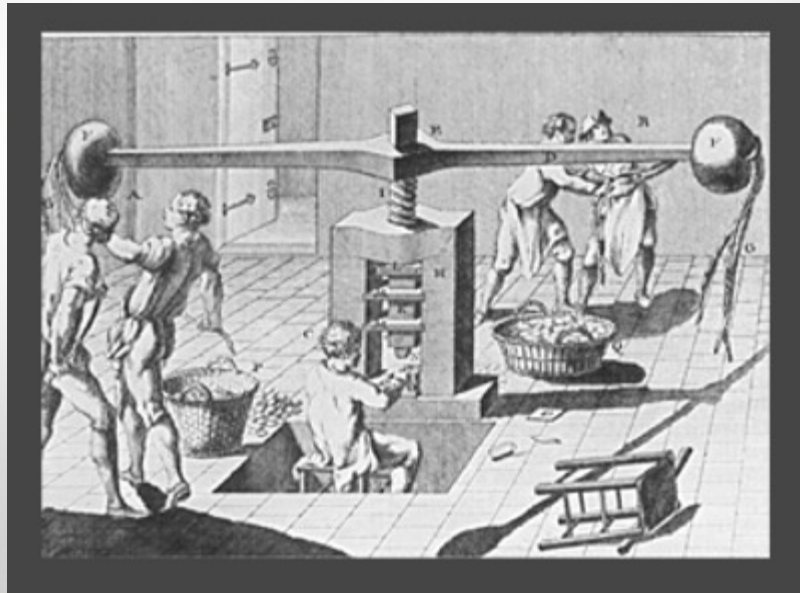
❖ November 12, 1785 – June 01, 1787 – Company for Coining  
Coppers – New Haven

Jarvis and Company – June 1, 1787 – Fall 1788 – same mint? – also  
made Fugios

Walter Mould – Morristown, NJ – 1787 counterfeits

Machin's Mills – Newburgh, NY – most 1788 varieties (minted into  
1789)

# HOW?





# THE DIES

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- ❖ 1785 - Hand cut dies were used
- ❖ 1786 – A new common hub containing all major design elements was used. Design details were strengthened and punctuation was added by hand.
- ❖ 1787 - Buell returned to using separate device and letter punches.

# COLLECTING

❖ one example for type



# BY YEAR 1785 - 1788



- ❖ By Red Book Type or “special” varieties such as the “Muttonhead”
- ❖ or “Horned Bust.”



# BY MILLER NUMBERS

350 VARIETIES! 1785 – 30, 1786 – 43, 1787 – 241,  
1788 – 37

- ❖ Sorry, no one uses Whitman numbers.
- ❖ The number and its decimal identify the obverse die. The letter(s), either capital or lower case, and the decimal identify the reverse die.



• M 14-



H

❖ Punctuation includes dots or stops, colons, hyphens, quatrefoils, cinquefoils, stars, crosses, fleurons, and phaeons. Often times a wrong or broken letter punch was used . All of these characteristics determine die varieties.



# WE ALSO LIKE...

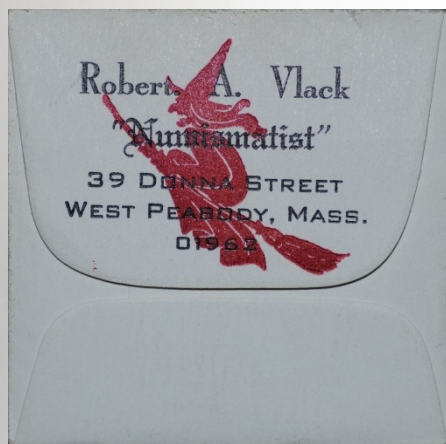
❖ Overstrikes



❖ M 10-C struck over Nova Constellatio

# PROVENANCE

- ❖ Connections to other collectors are noted. Ephemera is saved and valued.



M8-D plated in Robert Vlack's *Early American Coins*

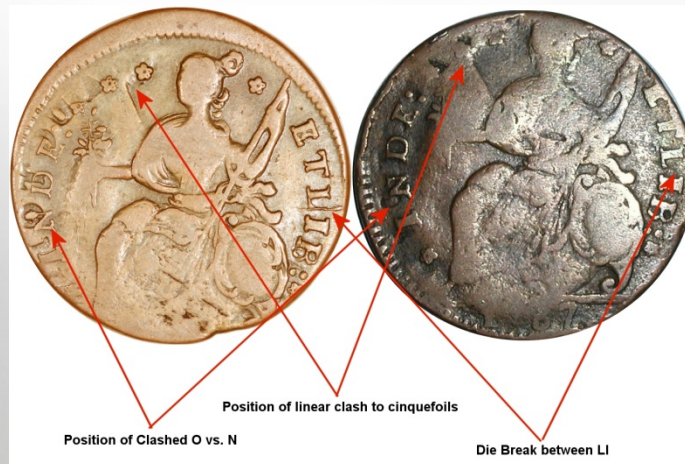
# PDV – PAINTED DIE VARIETY

❖ Earlier collectors used white India ink to paint their attributions directly onto the coins. These are prized, and some important collectors such as Hays and Canfield, can be identified through their markings.



# DIE STATES

❖ The coiners used dies until they fell apart. Looking for progressively deteriorating and reworked dies is part of the fun.



# RARITY

- ❖ R1 - > 1,250
- ❖ R2 – 501 – 1,250
- ❖ R-3 – 201 – 500
- ❖ R-4 76 – 200
- ❖ R-5 – 31 – 75
- ❖ R6 – 13 – 30 This is where rarity begins to affect price
- ❖ R-7 – 4 – 12
- ❖ R 8 – 2 – 3
- ❖ R-9 - unique
- ❖ Robert Martin revised rarity ratings at the Perkins sale. Many stated rarities are not correct in light of these revisions.



# WHAT ELSE?

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❖ Grading and valuation are two areas of interest to all collectors.

They may be outside the scope of this talk, however. These are also the areas where I have a lot of questions! Connecticut planchets are notorious for flaws and quality control was poor. Read, look at lots of coins, and study catalogs. Perhaps these topics can be visited another time.



# REFERENCES

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❖ Join C-4 (Colonial Coin Collectors Club). Join tonight, and I'll pay five bucks of the membership. It'll be the best \$20 numismatic investment you will make.

❖ Join the ANS and subscribe to the Colonial Newsletter at a discount.



# BOOKS

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- ❖ *Early Coins of America* – Sylvester S. Crosby – **gotta have it**
- ❖ *The State Coinage of Connecticut* – Henry C. Miller
- ❖ *Colonial and Early American Coins* – Q. David Bowers
- ❖ *Complete Encyclopedia of U. S. and Colonial Coins* – Walter Breen
- ❖ *Early American Coins* – Robert A. Vlack
- ❖ The Red Book

# CATALOGS

❖ Catalogs of major sales are invaluable to collectors of colonial coins. The following are landmarks for Connecticut collectors.

❖ EAC 1975

❖ Frederick B. Taylor – Bowers and Merena – March 26 – 28, 1987

❖ George C. Perkins – Stack's January 12-13, 2000

❖ John J. Ford Part IX – Stack's, May 10, 2005

❖ Americana (SLT) – Stack's – January 24 – 26, 2012

❖ C-4 auction catalogs (particularly Jesse Patrick collection – 2002 and Bob

❖ Lomphey collection – 2006)

## ALSO HELPFUL

- ❖ Notre Dame web site – This is a tremendous resource for all colonial coins
- ❖ <http://www.coins.nd.edu/>
- ❖ Yahoo has a colonial coins group. There are many knowledgeable, helpful folks there.