

## Count Your Pennies

Throughout the 1600s, few coins were used in Maryland. Most people exchanged tobacco, the main crop of the colony. Tobacco was used as money. However, people did not carry casks of tobacco with them when they needed to pay bills. Instead, they exchanged papers with written promises to pay later. This is similar to using a credit card today. The actual tobacco was only traded occasionally.

Cecil Calvert, the Lord Baltimore, wanted to change this situation. He introduced his own coins in the 1660s. The Calvert coins consisted of four denominations, or values—the shilling, the sixpence, the groat, and the penny.



The Calvert penny is made of a copper alloy. On one side (the picture on the left) is the face of Cecil Calvert. The words, which are in abbreviated Latin, say CAECILVS : DNS : TERRAE-MARIAE:&CT. That means Cecil, Lord of Maryland, etc.



On the other side (the picture on the right) is a crown with two pendants. The words say +DENARIVM: TERRAE-MARIAE (penny of Maryland).

However, the government in England did not think Lord Baltimore had the right to make his own coins. The coins never caught on, and the economy remained based on tobacco throughout the colonial period.

You can see a Calvert penny at the Historic St. Mary's City Visitor Center. The St. Mary's County Historical Society has loaned one from its collections to be put on display. If you would like your own reproduction Calvert Penny, stop by The Shop at Farthing's Ordinary!

- Lord Baltimore designed his own coin. If you could design your own coin, what would it look like? *Draw it below.*
- How much would it be worth?
- What would you want to spend it on?

