

"FROM MINE TO CONSUMER" THE ANACONDA COPPER COMPANY

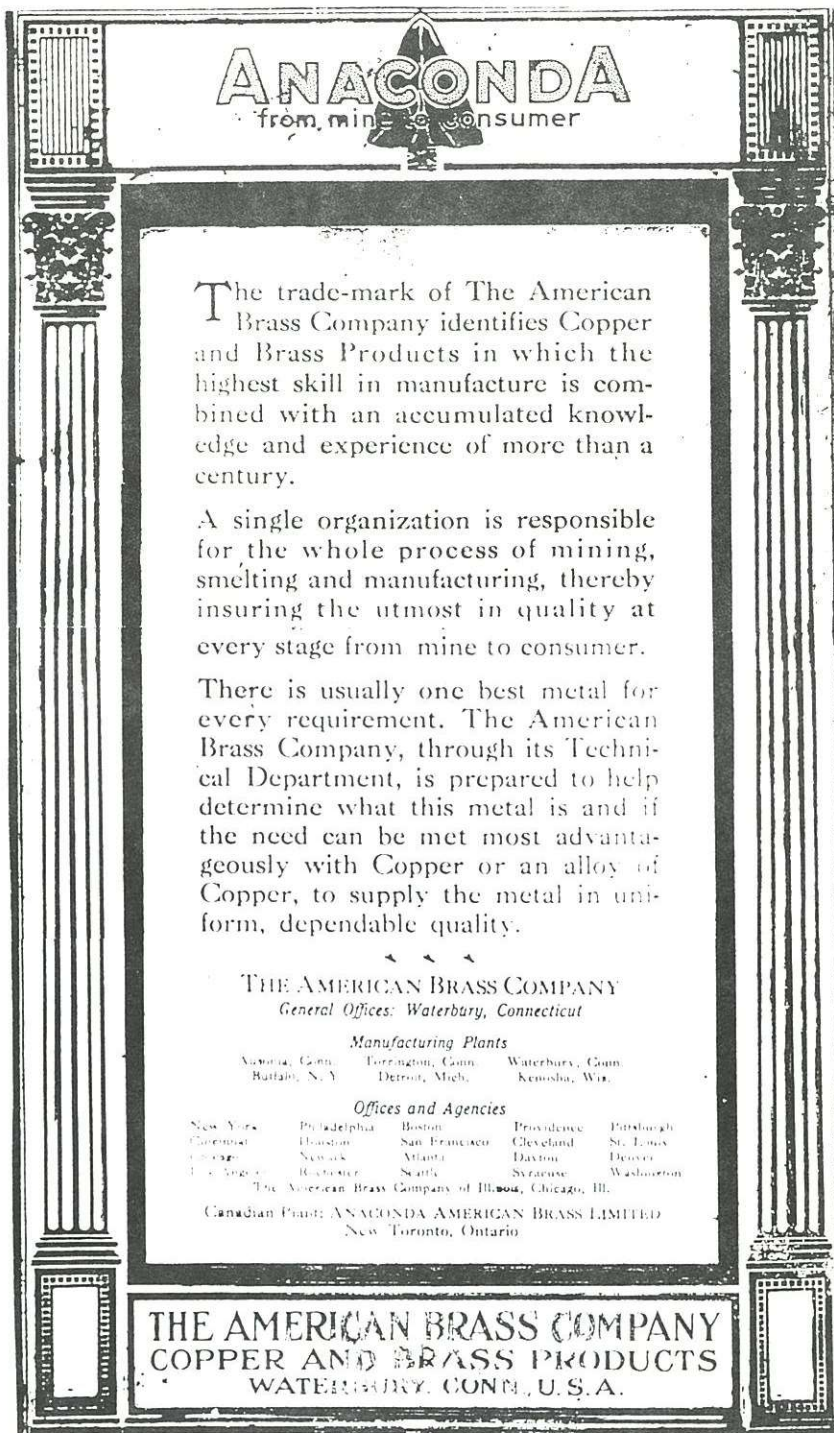
by John Neilsen
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On a crisp October morning in 1875, a former soldier in the Union Army staked out a claim on a hill overlooking what is today the city of Butte, Montana. This soldier turned prospector was Michael Hickey, and below him sprawled the crude streets of a mining camp bent on finding gold, silver, and eventually copper. While fighting in the Civil War, Hickey read an editorial by Horace Greeley in the New York Tribune which said: "Grant will encircle Lee's forces and crush them like a giant Anaconda." The word "anaconda" had caught Hickey's fancy, which led him to name his new claim the Anaconda.

This was the beginning of what would become the Anaconda Copper Company. They not only would operate mines in at least half a dozen states in the U. S. and three foreign countries, but would also operate concentrators, smelters, refineries, fabricators, and a host of other operations.

In the early 1920s, the Anaconda Copper Company was looking to expand into the copper fabrication business. They were very impressed with the output capacity of the American Brass Company of Waterbury, Connecticut, which was at that time the largest fabricator of non-ferrous metals in the world. The Anaconda Copper Company was convinced that a merger of the two companies would be highly advantageous to both parties and the public because it would eliminate many of the intermediary costs as well as creating other related economies.

In 1922, the Anaconda Copper Company bought the American Brass Company for the sum of \$45,000,000 and the slogan "From Mine To Consumer" was begun. The sale and merger of the Anaconda Copper Company and the American Brass Company was one of the largest up to that time in American industrial history.¹



A 14 x 22 brass sign from The American Brass Company which was bought out by the Anaconda Copper Company in 1922. (Author's collection)

1. Isaac F. Marcossou, *Anaconda*, (Kingsport, Tennessee: Kingsport Press Inc., 1957).