

THE MUNICIPAL COINS OF COLIMA

by Elwin C. Leslie

Seven municipal coins of Colima are listed and illustrated (No,106 - 112) in HACIENDA TOKENS OF MEXICO by O.P.Eklund and Sidney P Noe, ANS Monograph No.115. It is now known that more varieties than these seven do exist, and the purpose of this article is to list and illustrate all the type varieties and die-varieties known to the author.

Colima is a colonial town, having been founded in 1523 by 145 Spaniards led by Gonzalo de Sandoval under orders of Cortes, primarily as a base for obtaining precious metals. Originally it was given the name, SAN SEBASTIA in 1554. Philip II changed the name to VILLA DE SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS, but it soon reverted to VILLA DE COLIMA after the Indian word for the territory, COLLIMAN. Despite its isolated location it soon rose to become the third city in importance in New Spain.

A need for workers in the mines was fulfilled by charging Indians with rebellion or resistance and declaring them slaves. In addition, seizing large numbers of Indians and compelling them to serve as road builders and as porters for carrying supplies and ore between Colima and the mines and for obtaining and transporting food to Colima obtained forced labor. Over work and neglect took a tragic toll. Many of the Indians died in the in the mines or on the roads. Those that remained, completely broken in spirit and hope, practiced race suicide. Some Indian women refused to conceive, others disposed of their offspring before or after birth. The Indian population fell alarmingly.

In 1542 enslavement of Indians was prohibited by law, but the act came too late. In the valley around Colima only 20% of the population remained alive. The slavery act rang the death knell for the mines. As time went on, the land around Colima was gradually reclaimed as ranch and farm land. The town and the land started a slow but healthy regrowth.

From 1810, when insurgents first entered the Villa of Colima, for a period of over 50 years, the town suffered continual occupations and changes of administration. It was during this period that most of the municipal coins were struck, and it is only consistent, therefore, that they should, by their very crudeness, reflect the troubled times.

The minting was obviously done by inexperienced workers, as most of the pieces are miserably struck. Consequently, the drawings, wherever possible, are composites of several specimens. In a few instances, coins were not available for examination and it was necessary to make drawings from rubbings. Some allowance must be made for mistakes or omissions in minor detail for some pieces marked with an asterisk. (*)

The author will welcome any corrections or additions to this list. Thanks are expressed to Benny Nibert and to Donald Garretson for submitting coins for examination, and to Howard Gibbs for rubbings.

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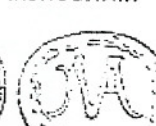
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1*
17982
18072a
(1) 8112b
1815

2c



2d

3
1813
EN 1064
1814
EN 1074a
18145
1816
EN 1085a
18165b
1821
CAM (ERROR) MONOGRAM5c
1822
CAM (ERROR) MONOGRAM5d
18265e
1826
Q REVERSE6
18247
1824
EN 118
18228a
1824
EN 110

MUNICIPAL COINS OF COLIMA – by Elwin C. Leslie

8b
1824

DIFFERENT REVERSE DIE

8c
18248d
18268e
1826

REENGRAVED 2 REENGRAVED 2

8f
18288g
18289
1830
EN 11210
DATE (?) IN CENTER OF REVERSE10a *
183811 *
183312
183612a *
183613
1853

14 *