

1827 Guanajuato & 1882 Hermosillo



1827 Guanajuato Pattern 8 Reales
Fig.1

Kent Ponterio, R-376

Among the most classic of Mexican pattern 8 Reales are the 1827 Guanajuato and 1882 Hermosillo, unique in their design and of exquisite beauty. The 1827 Guanajuato pattern was produced at the Royal Mint in London England by William Wyon, one of the most talented and noted engravers ever to work in England. It displays superior quality workmanship for the time, with its neatly detailed design, higher than normal relief and sharp strike. The lettering used in both the obverse and reverse legends are neatly cut and precise. Struck with a medallion die axis the piece bears a plain edge and has a very sharp upset rim with ornate denticles struck with the care and precision that is more reminiscent of contemporary English medals. It is undoubtedly struck with the state-of-the-art steam powered coining presses then available at the Royal Mint in London. Buttrey states that specimens were struck in London, the coins and dies were sent to Mexico in 1827. There they were seized by customs agents at the port of Veracruz, because they were in violation of the regulation that only the central mint at Mexico City could provide dies and matrices to the branch mints.

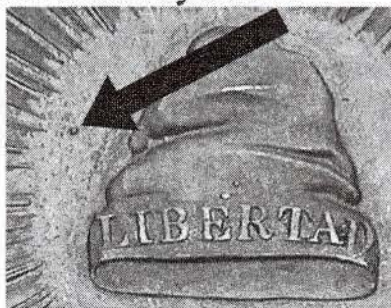


1882 Hermosillo Pattern 8 Reales
Fig.2

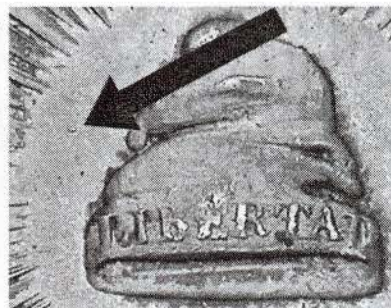
1880 Hermosillo 8 Reales circulation strike
Fig.3

The 1882 Hermosillo pattern bears the identical design to that of the 1827 Guanajuato pattern produced by William Wyon with the exception of the obverse legend. There are even identical defects within the dies which appear on both, most noticeably a small raised dot directly to the left of the liberty cap, however slightly less pronounced on the later. Some authors have assigned the Hermosillo pieces to being produced in England namely due to the origin of the dies, however their method of manufacture would suggest otherwise. Although the Hermosillo patterns strongly resemble the 1827 Guanajuato patterns there are several distinct differences. The first being the use of a milled edge identical to that of contemporary circulation strikes minted at the Hermosillo

mint. The Hermosillo pattern is struck with a coin die axis and bears an obverse legend produced with identical punches used on contemporary Hermosillo 8 Reales between 1876 and 1880. The assayers initial J.A. are consistent with that of Jesus Acosta, Assayer at the Hermosillo mint from 1877-1883. There is evidence of the planchet shifting slightly during striking leaving somewhat diagonal flow lines in the metal most prominent in the obverse and reverse legends. This would point towards the Hermosillo pieces being struck with inferior minting equipment, not being held firmly in a collar as the Guanajuato pieces were. Evidence would suggest that an unfinished pair of William Wyon's original Guanajuato pattern dies (obverse legend omitted) or the hubs used to produce dies some how wound up in Hermosillo in the early 1880s and were then engraved with the pertinent information pertaining to the mint at that time. How and why this strange phenomenon occurred still remains somewhat of a mystery. It is possible that the confiscated dies in Veracruz somehow remained intact for fifty five years and somehow made their way to the Hermosillo mint where they then saw use. It is also possible that since the mint was at that time leased to Mr. Robert R. Symon of the English firm Symon & Cia that the old William Wyon dies were purchased and brought over from England and used to strike these fascinating patterns. The exact occurrence of events may never be fully known.



Die defect on 1827 Go
Fig.4



Die defect on 1882 Ho
Fig.5

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