

# U.S. MEXICAN NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION



**JUNE 2013**



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**MEXICO.** Mexico City, 8 Reales,  
1733-MO MF. Mexico City.  
NGC MS-63.  
*Realized \$17,700*



**MEXICO.** 8 Reales, 1741-MF.  
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*Realized \$6,490*



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# DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

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## HELP WANTED

As the association has expanded its activities over the past couple of years we are in need of more active assistance from members. In particular, we need someone to act as Public Relations Director and are asking for volunteers. The job includes the following activities:

- Promote USMexNA in the media by issuing press releases about our group and our activities.
- Promote our conventions thru media releases and providing information to coin clubs and groups such as the ANA, the TNA and the Sociedad de México.
- Arrange for other members to distribute promotional literature about the association and our conventions at major coin shows. Many of our dealers are happy to help with this.

Generally, the job entails writing about a page of interesting information six times a year, adding photos and emailing it to the various entities. We have a pretty complete media contact list and plenty of photos that can be included.

Give me a call if you would like to volunteer.

## CONVENTION UPDATE

A reminder that our second annual convention will be held Thursday, Friday and Saturday 17-19 October at the Hilton Scottsdale Resort, 6333 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, Arizona.

Scheduled speakers now include:

Max Keech	War for Independence Counterstamps
Richard Long	A Life in Mexican Numismatics
Kent Ponterio	Colonial Cobs of Philip II & Phillip III
Elmer Powell	Revolutionary Currency and other Collectibles
Dan Sedwick	Overview of Mexican Coin Hoards on Colonial Shipwrecks

Dealers attending will include:

Lois & Don Bailey & Son	Hemet, California
Baja Numismatics	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Robert Briggs	Guadalajara, Mexico
Paul Brombal	Santa Barbara, California
Dave Busse	Harlingen, Texas
Mark Wm. Clark	San Francisco, California
Jed Crump	Houston, Texas
Mike Dunigan Company	Fort Worth, Texas
Sal Falcone	San Jose, California
Angel Smith Herrera	McAllen, Texas
Mexican Coin Company	Carefree, Arizona
Dan Sedwick	Winter Park, Florida
Stack's Bowers	Irvine, California

There will be a silent auction and open bar welcome party on Thursday evening at 6pm on the pool area patio just outside the convention rooms. We are starting to receive some great donations for the auction including grading certificates from all major grading services, a great dated 8 reales cob from Kent Ponterio and other nice coins and books from Mike Dunigan and the Mexican Coin Company. We still need additional donations so if you are feeling generous and want to help the association, send us something. I would be more than happy to hear from anyone who wants to participate.



We have arranged a special room rate at the Resort of \$159 per night, and I strongly urge you to make your reservations, as last year room rates after our block sold out were much higher. The easiest way to make a reservation is to go to [usmex.org](http://usmex.org) and follow the links.

Admission to the convention will be free to members, \$5 to nonmembers and free to all family members and kids under 15. Early entry is available to members only Thursday afternoon for a \$10 donation to the association per person.

Cory

Cory Frampton  
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## NEWS

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### IN MEMORY OF RICHARD G. DOTY 1942-2013

It is with great sadness that we share with you news of the passing of Richard G. Doty on Sunday 2 June, 2013 at age 71. Richard (Dick) served a long career in numismatics and contributed greatly to our hobby. From 1974 to 1986 he served as a curator for the American Numismatics Association in New York City. More recently (1986-2013) Dick served as the senior numismatic curator for the National Numismatics Collection at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. Throughout his career Dick authored several numismatic works, including *The Macmillan Encyclopedic Dictionary of Numismatics*, *Coins of the World*, various titles on United States coinage and paper money as well as various articles. Perhaps the most notable of his works in regards to the field of Mexican Numismatics is his ground breaking work *The Soho Mint & the Industrialization of Money*. His meticulous research brought to light never before seen documentation about the mints of Guanajuato, Mexico City, Culiacan, Chihuahua and Zacatecas during the early Republican years. Through this work we now know the origins of certain dies and patterns that were previously unknown. His vast knowledge of numismatics spanned not only this area, but many different fields. This is truly a great loss to the numismatic community. Gone, but not forgotten, Dick left behind a numismatic legacy that will live on indefinitely.

## FROM THE EDITOR

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Once again I have had to include an article of my own, not from some ego trip but because otherwise this journal would have nothing about paper currency whatsoever. So come on, "rag pickers" (as Clyde Hubbard greeted me over twenty years ago): you must have something to say.

At least I have the opportunity to thank Rick Ponterio for allowing me to look through the ABNC files that his company recently acquired. They have furnished me with material for several more little articles, should the need arise.

And another moan. I have not yet had a single response to my request for help with expanding our online library. I realize that under the Pareto Principle 20% of members will do 80% of the work, but it is your association and you should have an interest in its development. So please revisit what I wrote about the library and get in touch.

Simon Prendergast  
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Following is contact information for the Numismatic Society of Mexico:

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Contact: Roger Charteris

rchr1937@hotmail.com

Sociedad E-mail: contacto@sonumex.org.mx and its web page is [www.sonumex.org.mx](http://www.sonumex.org.mx)

Dues for the Sociedad are \$50 per year for US residents.

## ADVERTISING RATES

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Prices shown are for four issues paid in advance on an annual basis. All ads will be printed in color.

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**Next ad and article deadline is August 1.**



## MEMBERSHIP

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Regular Membership with printed copy of the Journal outside the US	\$50

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*Checks should be made payable to USMEX Numismatic Association.*

## NEW MEMBERS

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Armando Labra	Canfield, Ohio	Mathiew Masseboeuf	Carrieres sur Seine, France
Dan Huntsinger	Campbell, California	Pablo Barrera Jardón	Calimaya, Estado de México, Mexico
Eric Hulse	San Antonio, Texas		
Henry Wong	Teun Mun, N.T., Hong Kong	Scott Mitchell	San Antonio, Texas
Jose Serrano	Irving, Texas	William Austen	Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina

## NEW LIFE MEMBERS

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Alex Lynn	Baltimore, Maryland
Hannu Paatela	Merida, Yucatan, Mexico
Jorge Mehia Nieto	Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico

## PASSWORD

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**Zacatecas**

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## COVER IMAGE

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The cover shows a detail of a view of Zacatecas, originally published in 1836 in Carl Nebel's *Voyage pittoresque et archéologique dans la partie la plus intéressante du Mexique par C. Nebel, Architecte*. It shows the plaza alongside the cathedral and the Cerro de La Bufa in the background. Zacatecas is located in an area rich in deposits of silver and other minerals and due to the wealth that its mines provided became one of the most important cities in New Spain. Two of the articles in this journal deal with the coinage of Zacatecas.

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Republic Cap and Rays 8 Reales  
1827-Pi, MS63 NGC  
Realized \$63,250



Maximilian gold 20 Pesos  
1866-Mo, MS66 NGC  
Realized \$37,375



Republic Pattern Caballito  
Peso 1909, Choice Proof  
Realized \$34,500



Ferdinand VI gold 8 Escudos  
1756-MM, AU55 NGC  
Realized \$19,550



Felipe V Pillar 4 Reales 1733MX-MF  
superb toned UNC, MS63 NGC  
Realized \$25,300



Felipe V Pillar 8 Reales 1732Mo-F,  
Choice AU  
Realized \$86,250



Ferdinand VII gold 8 Escudos 1813-  
MR Guadalajara, AU55 NGC  
Realized \$54,625



Republic silver-plated bronze Pattern 8  
Reales 1840Do-OM, AU55 NGC  
Realized \$13,800

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26058



## BEHIND THE TABLE / ATRAS DE LA MESA

by Mark Wm. Clark

At the head of the list of new numismatic experiences was the Sociedad Numismática de México show in Mexico City, 28 February to 2 March: we were back upstairs in the usual room which has had some work done on it. It is brighter now and the layout of the room lead to changes in the table layout. Nothing overwhelming but it has more space now.

Activity was quite brisk! The show kept up a good pace through the set-up and three days with strong sales all around. The trend I see more and more is that 20th Century Mexican coins are coming back. Paper money was also strong, even in Bancos which seem to be a little slower here. I took in several want lists with requests to look around the US for coins and notes. There is definitely a lack of material on the market down there. What I am offered is either the same items (again) or lower grade coins and paper money. I also know several dealers are buying on eBay and other internet sources to get the material back to its home country. I am also getting asked to bring down more and more of the older reference books on Mexican coins and paper money. I used to buy them in Mexico and bring them up here for collectors wanting them. Now the direction is changing. Even though the economy seems a bit sluggish there, the numismatic market is strong.

At this convention, La Compañía de Subastas Numismáticas held its second auction. This time they added Mexican paper money with moderate success but there was strong interest in 20th Century, War for Independence and Revolutionary coinage. Angel Smith told me, "the Mexican market is strong for items in choice condition - an 1865 Zacatecas 1/8 Real in BU hammering for MXN \$13,500 (US \$1,080) and a 5c 1954 'Josefita Chica' in BU reaching MXN \$5,500. (US \$440)."

As soon as I got back from Mexico, even watching the Super Bowl from there, I had to pack up for a flight to Baltimore for the Whitman show. That show has been a bit quiet for a while now so I was able to roam/hunt the floor and it was fruitful. I filled some wants and set some future deals in motion. Overall I had to be pleased with the sales and auction. I won't be doing the Summer show there this June due to a personal conflict of interest.

The first weekend in April I attended the WESTS Token Show in Sacramento, CA. I have in the past been able to pick up some Latin American exnumia including some from Mexico, but not this time! The auction is now run by Fred Holabird and is online so national exposure gets in on the action and my bids were mainly unsuccessful. I did find a few things on the floor but mostly had to go for other categories.

My associate and I were the longest running dealers doing the Santa Clara show when it ended a few years ago, attending every show but one since it began. We did not get into the new Santa Clara show until the one in April this year. It is half the size of the old one but seems to be growing quickly. They have the same security team as before, which is a good thing as they are effective and know the territory and collectors/dealers well. The show was quite successful but unfortunately I won't be at the show next September as it is the same weekend as the Mexico City show. Can't miss that one!

In the last few weeks I took a trip down with supply and catalog orders to Mexico City and most of it was for orders taken last trip and by email. Other material I managed to stuff in the suitcases also sold. I found some books on other subjects and on Pre-Columbian cultures that came back with me. I also received more want lists and requests for the next trip. Again I emphasize that there is a strong and growing numismatic market down there.

There will be two numismatic auctions, probably held at the same hotel as the show, one on 15 June by Alberto Hidalgo; and the other on 13 July by Duane Douglas. Duane had to reschedule his auction due to a fall and broken rib. I visited him and he doing fine with just a few aches and pains. He is at the shop most of the time.

That reminds me that I have been meaning to mention another member of the numismatic scene for decades, Jed Crump. Jed has been getting treated for cancer and I just got an update from him that the treatments have been very effective and he expects to beat that nasty stuff. He is even putting in time back at the shop. Good wishes to you, Jed. We are all rooting for you.

I am looking forward to upcoming shows, especially TNA in Fort Worth at the end of May into June. A great place for Mexican numismatics and numismatists. Then Long Beach the next weekend, then the Memphis Paper Money Show. Also, make some plans for Scottsdale in October.

Mark Wm. Clark

mwclark12@yahoo.com (and thank you for the positive emails I have been getting from our readers and members and now at many shows also! Don't forget suggestions for me and for the North American Coins & Prices Mexico section.)



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# MISATTRIBUTED AND OVERLOOKED: A RARE NECESSITY ISSUE IS LOOKING FOR ITS RIGHTFUL PLACE AMONG THE MEXICAN WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE ISSUES

by Ralf W. Böppe



*Mexico. War for Independence.  
8 Reales, n. d. – Mint of San Miguel Tenango / Vicente Beristáin  
Countermarks "SM" in oval dotted circle and "VB" in oval serrated circle on the obverse of  
a cast silver Mexico City 8 reales of 1809, crudely reeded edge, 27.58gm*

This coin is a very rare issue of one of the makeshift mints of the War for Independence period, and it has been overlooked ever since by collectors. This is due to the fact that, starting with the very first catalogs on Spanish Colonial coins, it was misattributed and even placed with locations outside of Mexico.

## The coin in numismatic literature

The first reference to this coin is found in the catalog of the Vidal Quadras y Ramón collection (Barcelona, 1892), vol. III, p. 125, No. 10,943. An 1809 cast is shown and described under the heading "Santa Marta", a Caribbean coastal town in northern Colombia. The attribution to Santa Marta may be deduced from the design of the necessity issues that had been attributed to that location in the earlier work of Heiss, *Descripción general de las monedas hispano-christianas* (Madrid, 1865). These coins – quarter and half reales in copper and a silver two reales of the *macuquina* or cob type – bear the mint mark "SM" and, in particular, one of the 1 real coppers shows a reverse design of the letters SM in a beaded circle that bears a striking and – at least for the early cataloguers – convincing resemblance to the countermark on the left of our coin.



*Reverse of the Santa Marta, Colombia necessity issue that may have been the reason for the attribution of the coin to this place by 19th century numismatists (line drawing taken from Heiss, plate 67, No. 76)*



Herrera (*El Duro*, Madrid, 1914) has an entry for these counterstamps on page 123 under Santa Marta, citing a corresponding entry in the Meili catalog (J. Schulman sale of the Meili Collection, Amsterdam, 1910). However, he states that “today it is known that they correspond to coins fabricated by Vicente Beristáin in San Martín Texmelucan”, then lists two of these coins as issues under Fernando VII on page 232 (numbers 745 and 749, described as “*fabricado en San Martín Texmelucan*”). No. 745 (no picture) is the Vidal Quadras y Ramón coin, No. 749 is a cast from an 1810 host and is depicted on table XVII. How he came to this conclusion, and when, is not stated.

Medina in his *Monedas Obsidionales Hispano-Americanas* (Santiago de Chile, 1919) has an entry on Santa Marta with the smaller denominations mentioned above, but does not make any reference to our 8 reales in question, neither there nor elsewhere in his book.

Pradeau (*Numismatic History of Mexico*, Los Angeles, 1938) does not list our coin. If the author thought the coins and counterstamps to be of Colombian or otherwise non-Mexican origin, he would not have included it in his work, so this omission was most likely intentional. On the other hand, he does make a reference to Beristáin. He translates a letter from Beristáin to Morelos dated 3 November 1812 (in Hernández y Dávalos, Vol. IV, No. 152, pp. 660-661) in which Beristáin reports having turned into coins (“*he sellado*”) 22 of the silver bars taken during an attack on Pachuca (p. 116). Pradeau knew of the Herrera book, which he quotes extensively throughout his work. Yet he does not link Herrera’s mentioning of Beristáin with his translation of Beristáin’s letter to Morelos. Had he done so, our story most likely would have come to an early end here!

The next standard work on Spanish colonial coinage came out of the old world again. Dasí (*Estudio de los Reales de a Ocho*, Valencia, 1951) places the coins firmly with Santa Marta in Colombia. He describes and illustrates three examples in Vol. IV under No. 1379. The first is the Vidal Quadras y Ramón coin, now described as residing in the Yriarte collection. The second is the Herrera coin, and the third, also on a cast 1810 host, is from the collection of the Fábrica Nacional de Monedas y Timbres in Madrid. This coin carries an additional mark applied twice, the unidentified counterstamp of the letter H surrounded by dots (see image below).



Source: Dasí, Vol. IV, page 223

It is worthwhile pointing out that Dasí never mentions that the host coins are cast copies and not original Mexico City mint products, although this can easily be observed from the pictures alone.

Dasí also provides documentary evidence which he interprets as an explanation for the attribution to Santa Marta. According to these sources, the coins could have been part of a shipment sent in 1813 from Panama to the Royalists in Santa Marta, of “30.000 pesos of a coin of special design, produced by the insurgents of New Spain...”. The fact that none of the host coins bear a date later than 1813 is taken as further support of this argument.

The next sources are the respective entries in Burzio (*Diccionario de la moneda hispanoamericana*, Santiago, 1956-1958). While of a later publication date than Dasí, it does not make any reference to him. Most likely, Burzio did not know of Dasí’s work at the time he finished compiling and editing his *Diccionario*, and we should regard the two works as parallel publications. Burzio presents the coin under Santa Marta, but he also provides a detailed account of the discussion that had developed concerning it (or rather, over the “SM” stamp) among numismatists of the New World: Howland Wood of the ANS had also attributed it to the island of Margarita in the Lesser Antilles, an argument that was in turn refuted by Venezuelan numismatist Rafael Fosalba who correctly pointed out that the island was never called Santa Margarita and thus cannot have been the source for the “SM” abbreviation. Quite interestingly, while Burzio provides a résumé of the “SM” discussion and goes as far as citing the entries of Herrera for this coin, he completely ignores the

Texmelucan attribution and even goes on to speculate that the letter VB might stand for a nowadays unknown person responsible for assaying and guaranteeing the correct silver weight of the coin – thus ignoring Herrera’s mentioning of Vicente Beristáin as well!

So, with the foundations cemented by Dasí and Burzio, at least for the next two decades the coin remained firmly placed with Colombia in numismatic literature.

While Raymond (*The Silver Dollars of North and South America*, 2nd ed., Racine, 1964) does not list it at all, Elizondo (*Eight Reales and Pesos of the New World*, 2nd edition, San Antonio, 1971) shows an 1809 coin (but fails to describe it as cast) under Santa Marta. So do Yriarte and López-Chaves (*Catálogo de los Reales de A Ocho Españoles*, Madrid, 1965, p. 256), using an 1810 cast for the illustration and not the ex-Vidal Quadras y Ramón coin supposedly in the Yriarte collection.

In Mexican coin catalogs, Utberg (*Coins of Mexico*, 1963) does not list it, nor does Grove (*Coins of Mexico*, 1981). However, in another publication (*Numismatic Sidelines*, 1965, p. 74), Utberg shows photographs of three different coins in the Banco de Mexico collection, on cast hosts of 1811, 1812 and a Carlos IV 8 reales of 1794, respectively. By this we learn that even the numismatists at the Mexican central bank had accepted the attribution to Colombia at that time. This is reiterated in Sobrino (*La Moneda Mexicana – Su Historia*, Mexico, 1972), where a color photo of the 1794 cast in the Banco de México collection is shown, again with reference to Santa Marta.



Host coin: cast 8 reales of 1794,  
Mexico mint.  
Source: Sobrino p. 314 (Banco de  
México Collection)

In Bruce and Vogt’s *Standard Catalogue of Mexican Coins, Paper Money, Stocks, Bonds and Medals*, both the 1st and 2nd editions (1981 and 1985) list the coin under Colombia in the section of Trade Dollars.

Yet already a decade earlier, the first voices had appeared challenging the attribution to Colombia. This happened most prominently in the Superior Stamp & Coin Pradeau-Bothamley sales (Part III, 2-6 November, 1971, lot 1890, the host coin being a cast 1810 8 reales), where the cataloguers provide a lengthy argument and state that they regard this issue as coming from “an Insurgent commander, probably Vicente Beristáin”. According to them, the “SM” countermark could belong to one Dr. José de San Martín, Inspector of the State of Oaxaca.

Why and by whose initiative the coin was placed (back?) with San Martín Texmelucan in the following years is unclear. But we observe that the coin type appears twice in Richard Long auctions in the 1990s under Texmelucan (Sale 87, 1998, lot 174 and Sale 88, 1999, lot 152).



Host coin: cast 8 reales of 1812, Mexico mint.  
Source: Richard Long Auction 88, Dec. 1999,  
lot 152 (note that this coin only shows the  
“SM” counterstamp, placed on the left side  
of the bust where usually the “VB” stamp is  
found)

Finally Calicó (*Numismática Española*) catalogued the coin from their 9th edition (1998) onwards in the section of Fernando VII under “Ceca de San Martín Texmelucan” and thus granted the coin the status of having originated from a particular mint of the New World. This move could be explained if we accept Beristáin as the coiner. The proposed Oaxaca connection to Dr. José de San Martín would make no sense, as Beristáin was operating with Francisco Osorno in the Sierra de Puebla, as explained in the section below. So San Martín de Texmelucan could simply have been taken as a fallback for a more probable explanation for the “SM” counterstamp, having been put on this track by the earlier attribution by Herrera.

All in all, the general consensus has at least accepted that the coin was a Mexican issue of the War for Independence period and should be catalogued as such.

Yet, the most widely used catalog of modern world coins has still not caught up with this. Krause-Mishler’s *Standard Catalog of World Coins* is still listing our coin under Colombia as of today! All this despite the fact that not even Colombian numismatists claim ownership of this issue – most clearly demonstrated by the fact that it is not listed in the authoritative Restrepo catalog (*Coins of Colombia, 1619 to 2012*, Medellín, 2012).



## Vicente Beristáin and the coinage operations in Zacatlán

Francisco Osorno operated as an Insurgent and military strongman in the regions known as Llanos de Apan and Sierra de Puebla, which under Insurgent administration was part of the Departamento del Norte. Contemporary accounts exist of how and when coins were produced under him in the town of Zacatlán. Emergency issues that can be attributed to him very easily are the copper reales, two reales and medio reales with the Osorno monogram and with the name of the town Zacatlán stamped on them (see Krause-Mishler KM-250 to KM-25 / Grove 2794 to 2298). In the context of these reports on coinage activities, we find the mentioning of one Vicente Beristáin de Souza. He came from an upper class family of Puebla, his brother was the dean of the cathedral of Mexico. Beristáin had had some military experience as member of the Spanish Colonial Army and was a specialist in artillery and the use of field culverins.

There are only a few sources reporting the daily operations of Insurgents, and many times one source quotes the other, and facts get confused. What we can accept, however, is the following order of events: having come to the conclusion that the independence movement was fighting the right cause and would eventually succeed, Vicente Beristáin joined the Insurgent forces of Serrano, who operated under Osorno, in April 1812. He helped the insurgent leader to execute a successful attack on Pachuca on 23 April 1812, where, among other items, several hundred bars of silver were taken. Some of this silver was sent to Morelos and Rayón but part of it was coined into money by the Osorno forces. This most presumably happened in Zacatlán, a village that had been occupied by Osorno on 30 August 1811 and had developed into an increasingly important insurgent stronghold.



*San Miguel Tenango in the state of Puebla today*

Close to Zacatlán lies the little hamlet of San Miguel Tenango, a place that had been fortified and where Beristáin went to set up an armory, a smelter and coin production facilities. He relied on the assistance of Belgian-born Pedro Lachaussee, a mining engineer. The place was in operation for many months until, on 19 May 1813, with Osorno and his main troops away on a campaign, a Royalist expedition entered Zacatlán, which had been abandoned by the remaining Insurgents on the news that the enemy was approaching. While the Spanish troops were rather surprised by their success and not numerous enough to keep the town and thus had to retreat in the following days, they were nevertheless able to destroy the fortifications and production facilities in both Zacatlán and San Miguel Tenango.

Little is known about the following months but it appears that Beristáin was unable to rebuild the fortifications and installations at San Miguel as he had to flee the place again in August in the face of another military expedition of the Royalists. After growing tensions between him and Osorno about seemingly private matters (a "question of skirts", as Villaseñor delicately puts it), he was arrested and executed by the Insurgent leader on 9 February 1814.

There are other sources which point to coining activities in Zacatlán later in 1814, when Ignacio López Rayón was there by invitation of Osorno and had brought the silversmith and moneyer Rodríguez Alconedo with him. However, it can be safely assumed that any coins that might have been made during this period would have been either of the Tlajupajhua or of the SUD type.

We can conclude, therefore, that the minor coins struck bearing the name of Zacatlán and the monogram of Osorno most likely were produced during the time the production facilities in Zacatlán / San Miguel Tenango were in operation, that is, before May 1813. This also coincides with the dates on these coins, 1812 and 1813 (note that the Osorno monogram counterstamp is something that could have been stamped on coins at any time before, during or after the minting operations at San Miguel).

But what about our countermarked silver 8 reales? They are cast, unlike the Osorno coinage which is struck. They bear neither the Osorno monogram nor the name of the town Zacatlán. In short, they are completely unrelated in denomination, metal, production method and the symbols or signs used on them. So why would we place their coming into existence at the same time and the same location?

It is important to realize that the Osorno-Zacatlán coinage is made of copper. Silver two reales are listed by some catalogs, but they are either excessively rare or simple cataloguing errors. From 22 bars of silver, some pieces should definitely have survived and be known today. So the important question remains - into what were the silver bars obtained in the attack on Pachuca coined?

## Conclusion

I have come to the conclusion that there must have been two separate coining operations. On one side, there are the minor issues of Osorno-Zacatlán, made for local use and to facilitate everyday local commerce. They are copper coins that were produced over several months and consequently are known with the dates 1812 and 1813, coins that could serve their purpose although they were very crudely made. On the other side, the silver bars from Pachuca were transformed quickly into coins – according to Beristáin's own report to Morelos this had already been done by November 1812, that is, within a few weeks in mid-1812. This coinage would have been made of the highest possible quality. Larger silver coins could be used for much needed investments in arms and fortifications or for purchases of goods from other regions of Mexico. For these “external trade” coins, weight, fineness and overall appearance were an important factor for their acceptance.

Nowhere in the historical documents is there any mention of coinage operations in San Martín Texmelucan. As was shown above, it remains unclear to me why such an attribution had been made in the numismatic literature of the past.

On the other side, Vicente Beristáin (“VB”) is reported to have made silver coins in San Miguel Tenango (“SM”). He had the metal to produce them, the foundry to cast them, the expertise with Don Pedro Lachaussee to produce them at a high level of quality, the workshop to mark them with counterstamps, and the time and opportunity to produce them, somewhere in late 1812.

All this coincides with the coins in question. As we can observe from the surviving specimens, the hosts are rather well made for cast coins (in comparison, for example, to the cast products of Chihuahua, Monclova and the southern Insurgents). In fact, they are so well made that some of the earlier cataloguers even failed to describe them as cast pieces! The counterstamps are strongly struck and placed on the same spot in all the coins, resulting in a very uniform issue (with the sole exception of the coin pictured from the Richard Long auction). Even some form of edge reeding was applied. All this speaks of a well-established place of manufacture and definitely not an “on-the-run” and makeshift production facility.

There is no absolute proof for my conclusion, and there most likely never will be. However, the Insurgent mint of San Miguel Tenango under the administration of Vicente Beristáin definitely is the most likely attribution for this issue. Two hundred years after coming into existence, it is about time to put both the mint of San Miguel Tenango and the corresponding coinage of Vicente Beristáin de Souza in their rightful place in the numismatic history of Mexico!

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García, Gennaro, *Documentos históricos mexicanos, obra conmemorativa del primer centenario de la independencia de México*, México: Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, 1910, Tómo VI, pp. 499-501: *Declaración de José Mariano Ortega Moro, Zacatlán, 20 de mayo de 1813*.

Guedea, Virginia, *La insurgencia en el Departamento del Norte: los Llanos de Apan y la Sierra de Puebla, 1810-1816*. México: UNAM, 1996.

Villaseñor y Villaseñor, Alejandro, *Biografías de los héroes y caudillos de la Independencia*, México: Editorial Jus, 1962.

Biography of Vicente Beristáin online: <http://www.senado2010.gob.mx/docs/bibliotecaVirtual/9/2652/101.pdf>



## 8 REALES OF THE PROVISIONAL MINT OF ZACATECAS

by Ricardo de León Tallavas

Contrary to some beliefs, the War of Mexican Independence did not start in 1810 in Guanajuato as an internal political and military outcry. Although 1810 was not the beginning of the separation of New Spain from Old Spain, it certainly did mark a starting point for a variety of coins bearing different styles than that officially dictated by Spain. Due to the interrupted supply of silver to the mint of Mexico City in 1810 it was decreed that mints would be opened in Monclova and Chihuahua as well as Zacatecas. Later that same year the Governor of Chihuahua decided (on his own account) to open mints in Durango and Sombrerete. These "provisional mints" set up in times of necessity are as intriguing as their coins are collectable. The mint of Zacatecas stands out as one of the most prolific, yet little is written about its types and varieties. I decided to share some basic outlines as to types hoping that other numismatists will share their findings regardless of how basic they might be. Due to the extensive nature of the coinage issues by this mint, this small study covers only the 8 reales denominations. To simplify the numismatic time-line for the coinage designs of Zacatecas we start with the Spanish legend "Moneda Provisional (Provisional Coin)". This type evolved from a local allegorical design to that of a more official design when the bust was included. However this evolution took two full years to fully develop.



The LVO series (1810 – 1811) began with a scarce type of local design. This type deviated drastically from the traditional coinage designs of the time. The obverse depicted the mountain range Cerro de La Bufa, while the reverse shows a deviated version of the Hapsburg arms with pomegranate sprigs in place of the traditional lions (KM-189). The legend also deviates as it is found continuous on both obverse and reverse starting at 9 o'clock. This type was followed by a more refined appearance that bore the arms with the traditional lions and a legend starting between 12:00 and 1:00 (KM-190). Very rare mules also exist between these two types, linking them together.



In September of 1811 the mint began to issue a very crude portrait coinage which lasted from 1811-1812 (KM-191). This new portrait was reminiscent of the silver coinage of Charles III that began in 1772, and depicted the king wearing a cuirass of armor with drapery. Other changes include the placement of the denomination on the obverse after the king's ordinal.



Evidence would suggest that Zacatecas did not produce a coin depicting Ferdinand VII with a draped portrait until probably very late in 1812. The reverse of this draped portrait type continued with the "Moneda Provisional" legend, as had been standard since November 1810 when the mint opened (KM-192). The denomination "8R" was also moved to the reverse after the word "Zacatecas". This appears to be the last year of the Moneda Provisional type as the following year the mint began striking coins of the official design with the legends in Latin conforming with other colonial mints.



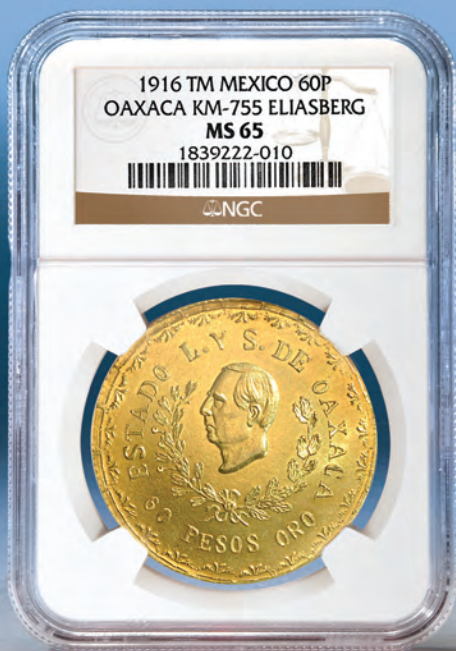
In 1813 Zacatecas finally introduced coinage of the official style (i.e. legends, bust and denomination in accordance with Spanish decree); however the mint clearly lacked consistency. This lack of consistency produced a number of style, design placement and legend variants. One such variant of 1813 shows a small bust and the large coat of arms of 1812 (KM-111.5-a-var). This was likely produced for a very brief period, as the larger bust and more refined coat of arms is typical for this date.





Similar to the previous type, this 1813 – 1817 portrait (KM-111.5-b-var), has a line that opens from truncation up to the brooch at the shoulder of the drapery. I am sure that in time many sub-varieties will appear of these two main styles. For now these characteristics at the base of the bust can determine two different varieties for Zacatecas' draped bust coinage. Other varieties have also been discovered. For instance a hybrid design of 1818 – 1822 with a continuous border similar to that of the 1812 – 1813 style and with a larger concavity. This poses questions, causing one to speculate. What is the rarity of the 1813 date of the 1812 variety? Is there is an 8 reales of 1818 with the 1817 style? Time will determine as more data becomes available and more coins are examined. Remember, just because a variety is not catalogued or listed it does not mean it cannot and does not exist. So, get out your loupes!

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## CONTEXT OF THE ZACATECAS STATE COPPER DESIGN

by Greg Meyer

While looking over the wide variety of state copper designs, I have found myself coming back to the Zacatecas state designs again and again over the years. In digging around the reference books, few if any references are given on the how and why of any of the state copper designs. The complexity and variety of the motifs on the Zacatecas state coppers prevented their easy forgery in the Republic period and they were the only ones exempt from the devaluation debacle that occurred at the national level in 1837. The widely divergent design motifs are what have caught my eye and still provoke my wonder when I come upon a well-struck uncirculated example (a very rare occurrence outside of the later dates of the series).

I want to start with the standard description developed by Buttrey and Hubbard:

Obverse .- A pyramid with a foliage of leaves, supporting an open book of the constitution inscribed 'LEY' (law) with three laurel wreaths below and a fourth leaning against the right side of the pyramid. The legend "EST<sup>o</sup>. LIB<sup>e</sup>. FED. ZACATECAS" or "DEPARTAMENTO ZACATECAS".

The year and the word "★QUARTILLA★" or "★OCTAVO★"

Reverse .- An angel flying to the right, head turned left carrying an arrow across the left shoulder. Above the head the radiant Phrygian Cap, below, a fort and a hill with a flag on top.

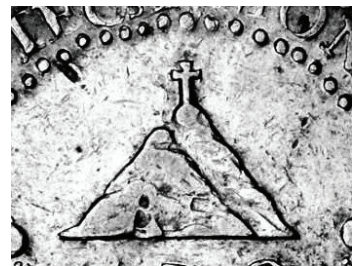


Reverse



My first question was, why would the engravers go to the trouble of putting this small motif of some hills or mountains with some obvious structures that must have had some symbolic importance? The answer I propose lies in the very founding of Zacatecas. The discovery of silver at La Bufa, the mountaintop that is next to the present day city of Zacatecas, is what led to the state's colonization by Spaniards and the founding of the city. I cannot take credit for recognizing La Bufa as the hill or hills, Grove formally described them first. What I would like to elaborate upon is the use of this motif and the buildings included in it.

During the War for Independence, Zacatecas Royalists produced provisional silver coinage in 2R and 8R that used a design highlighting the Cerro de la Bufa with a cross placed either on the top peak or sometimes on the lower peak. This design did not include any indication of other buildings, but, it does mark the birth of the mountain motif on a coin related to Zacatecas.





This is an 1870s view of the city cathedral and the Cerro de la Bufa in the background from Plaza del Tianguis. This seems to be nearly the viewpoint for the design motif below Eros/Cupid on the Zacatecas state coinage. The buildings in the Zacatecas state copper seem to include the cathedral in the city proper and also possibly the fort that sits in the saddle between the two peaks of the Cerro de la Bufa.

Here is a modern era photograph with an orientation of the cathedral and the Cerro de la Bufa that is almost in the same orientation as the die design. If one was to stand on a building on the plaza which is in the right side foreground as in the 1870s photo, the orientation would produce the closest rendition possible.



A close up of the mountaintop. The structure on the top left seems to be an addition since the early 1900s and certainly was not there in the 1822-1824 time frame when the die designs were finalized. The building with the large open arch below it is the top part of a gondola transport for tourists. The long low structure (at times a fort and at other times in church use) has had a presence since at least 1870s from the photographic evidence.





And now, after the anti-clerical waves of Independence and Revolution, in modern Zacatecas one can see the cross originally depicted by the Royalists during the War for Independence lit up at right on the very top of La Bufa.

### **The Angel is really Cupid (Roman) or Eros (Greek)**

My second question upon inspection of the flying figure was “where is the angel’s halo?” Angels typically are in robes. The coin image has neither. Cherubs seem to fit the general nakedness of the figure better, but, this is not a figure of a baby, it is a boy. Unfortunately, the original Zacatecas decree cannot be currently found through library collections or online resources in the U.S. to confirm the original intent of the design.

Botticelli’s Renaissance painting of Cupid is very reminiscent of the device seen on the Zacatecas coin. With the establishment of the new Republic it is likely that the die designers wanted to draw upon classical imagery connected to the democracies of Greece and the republic of Rome.



Classical antiquity produced many sculptures from both Greek and Roman eras that show Cupid with his bow and arrow. The Zacatecas device marries the use of the arrow analogy with the Phrygian cap to indicate the freedom of all and the universal love that was supposed to come with the new Mexican republic.

The laurel wreath on the head of the figure is also indicative of classical references pertaining to victory. In the case of Cupid wearing the laurel wreath, the intent was likely to be indicative of the victory of love and freedom in the new Mexican Republic.

Further information might lie in the state or municipal archives in Zacatecas or elsewhere, but until we track down a copy of the actual decree authorizing these coins these motifs will still be up to interpretation. However, I hope that my elaboration has added knowledge of the Zacatecas state coinage.



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The Banco de Zacatecas also used a vignette of La Bufa on some of its notes. The bank was founded in May 1891 and operated in Zacatecas and several adjoining states. It was able to satisfy the assets requirements for banks of issue in 1915 only to have its charter cancelled in the general revocation of bank charters by Carranza in 1916. An attempt was made to reorganize as a *banco refaccionario* (development bank) under the law of 1926, but this was unsuccessful.



# REVOLUTIONARY MEXICO-STUDY OF THE 1915 JALISCO 2 CENTAVOS VARIETIES

by Scott Doll

## Introduction

Jalisco is the sixth largest state in Mexico and located in the west central part of the country along the Pacific coast with Guadalajara as its capital. During the Mexican Revolution it had many battles fought on its soil and was one of the strongholds of Venustiano Carranza and Alvaro Obregón. Francisco "Pancho" Villa's Ejército del Norte (Army of the North) also operated in Jalisco in 1914 and 1915 and coinage from the revolutionary period is attributed to this faction. Coins minted in Jalisco during the revolution were reportedly minted in the old Federal mint in Guadalajara. Although the Jalisco revolutionary issues have a relatively high level of quality and design, arguably they still don't match up to the other revolutionary coin issues from Chihuahua, Oaxaca or Aguascalientes.

Jalisco coins were minted with a date of 1915 in at least five known denominations. The bulk of the coins minted include common issues of 1 centavo, 2 centavos and 5 centavos. Each of these issues all had a very similar design; however, the 10 centavos and 1 peso coins carry a different design altogether and are quite rare.

This article will focus on the three known die varieties for the 2 centavos issue.

- Variety 1: large cap and large rays; legend letters and digits with a block style in shape with reasonably consistent position and spacing. Rays around the cap are bold and have consistent spacing. They are also symmetrical in appearance around the cap.
- Variety 2: medium cap and short rays; similar legend letter and digit styles as Variety 1 except some have rounded features with fairly consistent position and spacing. Rays at the base of the cap are sparsely spaced and have inconsistent length compared to Variety 1.
- Variety 3: small cap and short rays; legend has inconsistent and rounded letter and numeral sizes (tall and short), spacing (wide and narrow) and position (angled or straight up and down). Rays at the bottom of the cap are very short and almost nonexistent.

Variety 1 is catalogued in *Mexican Revolutionary Coinage 1913-1917* by Hugh S. Guthrie and Merrill Bothamley as GB-240 and was struck in copper with a plain edge. In the more recent publication, *Compendio De La Moneda De La Revolución Mexicana* by Carlos Abel Amaya Guerra this coin was catalogued as A-JL 5 (thin planchet) and A-JL 6 (thick planchet). Variety 2 in copper with a plain edge was unknown and not catalogued by Guthrie and Bothamley; however catalogued by Amaya as A-JL 8. Variety 3 in copper with a plain edge was also unknown to Guthrie and Bothamley, but catalogued by Amaya as A-JL 9.



Variety 1 Large Cap & Long Rays Variety GB-240, A-JL 5 (thin planchet) or A-JL 6 (thick planchet)



Variety 2 Medium Cap & Short Rays Variety GB-UNL, A-JL 8\*



*Variety 3 Small Cap and Short Rays GB-UNL, A-JL 9*

All three varieties were struck in copper with a plain edge. There is no evidence that there were any struck in brass or with a reeded edge. All 2 centavos are basically the same approximate size in diameter (20mm), but weight varies from 3.00 grams to 5.50 grams due to the crude minting practices at the time which produced inconsistent size planchets. These are often times referred to as thin planchets or thick planchets depending on the weight.

The mintage for each variety is unknown as with most coins from the revolution. It is also not known which of the varieties was minted first. It seems most likely that Variety 3 came first since it is the crudest in quality and design of the three varieties. Variety 2 was probably minted about the same time; however, it has a much improved, more refined design than Variety 3. It is possible that Variety 2 and Variety 3 were early trial strikes or possibly crude, quickly designed early issues. Variety 1, more than likely, was the last to be produced since it shows the best quality and most refined design. It is also the most common in quantity of the three known varieties. I speculate that once the Guadalajara mint became fully functional, the die for Variety 1 was produced with more care and attention to the die details compared to what was seen in the other two varieties and became the primary die used for the 2 centavos issue. This die design is also more consistent in style and design with that used for the 1 centavo and 5 centavos Jalisco coins issued around the same time.

### **Analysis and Comparison of the 2 Centavos Obverse Die Varieties**

Although there are numerous differences in the obverse dies of the three known varieties, it is the difference in the LIBERTAD lettering across the base of the cap which is the most easily recognizable while the rays at the base are the next noticeable.



*Variety 1 Large Cap & Long Ray  
Variety GB-240, A-JL 5 obverse*



*Variety 2 Medium Cap & Short Ray  
Variety GB-UNL, A-JL 8 obverse\**



*Variety 3 Small Cap & Short Ray  
Variety GB-UNL, A-JL 9 obverse*

As mentioned previously, the legend letters and numerals in the date are different and can help highlight some of the variety differences. Legend letter and numeral sizes, spacing and position are inconsistent and rounded in shape on Variety 3, while the letters and numerals are more uniform in size, block style in shape with relatively consistent position and spacing on Varieties 1 and 2. These differences are easily seen on closer examination of the letters "B", "C", "M", "P" and "R" while the differences in the date (1915) is most easily seen in the digits "9" and "5".



*Variety 1*



*Variety 2\**



*Variety 3*





Variety 1



Variety 2\*



Variety 3

### Analysis and Comparison of the 2 Centavos Reverse Die Varieties

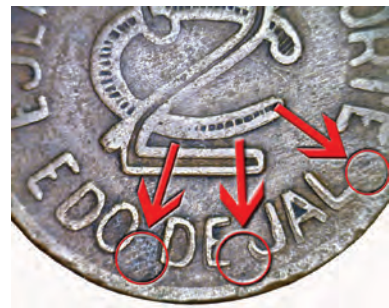
Like the obverse, the reverse legend lettering is quite different between the three varieties. The reverse legend also has another feature to help distinguish the varieties. Variety 1 has a period after EDO and JAL, but missing after DE, thus shows as "EDO.DE JAL.". Variety 2 is missing a period after EDO, but has one after DE and JAL, thus shows as "EDO DE.JAL.". While Variety 3 has no periods after EDO, DE or JAL, thus shows as "EDO DE JAL".



Variety 1



Variety 2\*



Variety 3

The letter "L" on Variety 1 reverse is different than Varieties 2 and 3. The "L" on Variety 1 has a small vertical notch at the back portion of the letter that is about half the length of the letter. This feature is missing on Varieties 2 and 3 where the letter looks like a normal capital "L".



Variety 1



Variety 2\*

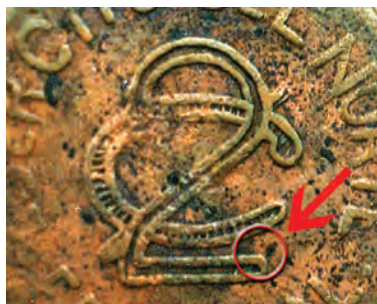


Variety 3

Like the letter "L", the reverse Variety 1 has a similar feature on the denomination digit "2" which can be seen as a small vertical notch at the back portion of the digit. Varieties 2 and 3 do not have this feature.



Variety 1



Variety 2\*



Variety 3

## Varieties Rarity

Variety 1 (GB-240, A-JL 5 & A-JL 6) is a relatively common coin from the Mexican Revolution and can be easily found in online coin auctions and at dealers' tables at coin shows for reasonable prices. These coins are usually seen in circulated condition; therefore expect to pay a premium for high grade and uncirculated specimens. On the other hand, Variety 2 (GB-UNL, A-JL 8) and Variety 3 (GB-UNL, A-JL 9) are rare coins and very seldom seen offered for sale in any condition.

Please send any additional information, comments, questions or suggestions you have on this article to Scott Doll at [rscottdoll@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rscottdoll@sbcglobal.net).

\* Photos courtesy of Carlos Abel Amaya from his book, *Compendio De La Moneda De la Revolución Mexicana*.

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Special thanks to Carlos Abel Amaya for his comments and coin scans; as well as Joe Flores for his comments and support which helped me tremendously in the study and writing of this article.

## THE AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY – THE OLD FLOOZIE

by Simon Prendergast

*"Naturally our policy has always been, where a government existed, to do nothing for any revolutionists irrespective of the fact that the government in question was a customer of ours or not, but Mexico, at the present time, presents a different and peculiar aspect. There is no government and until one exists, provided we get paid for what we do, I can see no reason why we should not furnish notes to any one who wants to get in the running."*

It is well-known that during the Mexican Revolution the American Bank Note Company ("ABNC") printed notes for the revolutionary Sonora government of José María Maytorena and for Francisco Villa's Banco del Estado de Chihuahua. Now recently revealed files<sup>1</sup> show how far it operated under the principles enunciated above in an April 1915 memorandum. The surviving files are incomplete so this article should be considered as only a preliminary study that should encourage further research: however, they contain details of five proposed issues.

### Estado de Sinaloa

The revolutionary governor Felipe Riveros had already issued a series of provisional Estado de Sinaloa notes (M3763-M3779) which were locally produced, easy to counterfeit and not readily accepted by the public. In January 1915 he wrote to the ABNC for a quote to replace these with a definitive issue (as Maytorena was doing in Sonora). The ABNC replied with quotations for 1,225,000 notes in five lower denominations and 87,000 notes in three higher denominations, but no other correspondence is on file, and Riveros in fact had these replacements, with the same denominations and series as in the ABNC specification, (M3781-M3788) printed by Britton & Rey of San Francisco, probably both because of cost and a quicker delivery.



## Banco del Estado de Oaxaca

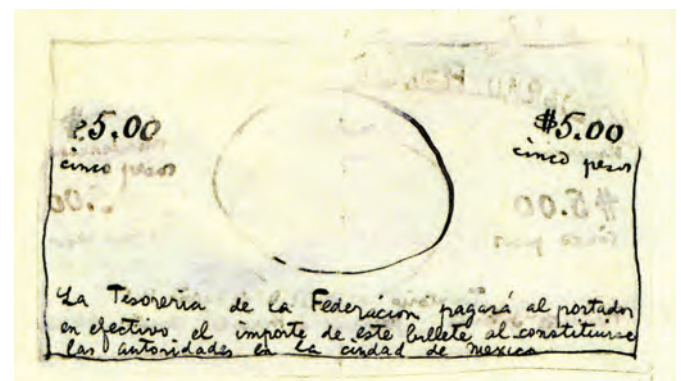
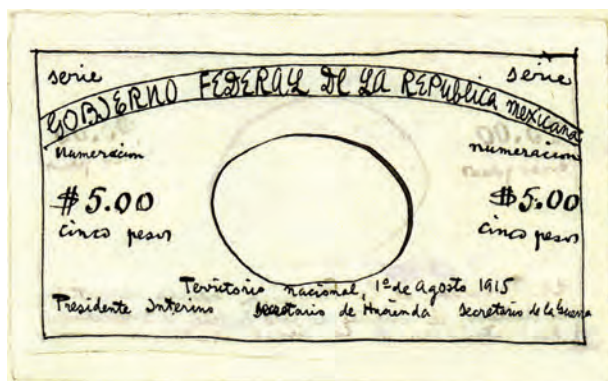
In November 1914 the ABNC was quoting for 8,937,000 notes of nine denominations from 50 centavos to 1,000 pesos, as well as for cheques and stock certificates, for a proposed bank in the state of Oaxaca. The bank was supposedly authorized by a decree of 15 August 1914 and the notes were to be signed by the Presidente de la Junta de Gobierno as well as the Cajero and Interventor del Gobierno. Since the rebels held Oaxaca at this time, and Huerta had resigned the presidency in July 1914, this may well have been the work of some Mexico City chancers taking advantage of the confusion. By February 1915 the ABNC was anxious for a response to its queries but it was only in June that it was informed that the "English party who is interested in this Bank had given authorization to deposit with the Central Trust Company the sum of £250,000 to start the establishment". There the correspondence ends.

## Victoriano Huerta

When Victoriano Huerta was forced from the presidency in July 1914 he went into exile, in Britain, then Spain, and arrived in the United States in April 1915. In May the ABNC had received a personal introduction to Abraham Z. Ratner, a wealthy newspaper owner who was Huerta's financial adviser and private secretary. The ABNC wrote to Ratner with a quotation for 1,832,500 notes (later reduced to 750,000) in seven denominations and agreed to have the engravings finished and ready for approval by 30 June. However, it added a stipulation that no delivery would be made to Ratner until "Gen. Huerta is on Mexican soil and is recognized as President of Mexico by such portion of the Mexican Congress as are on Mexican soil". On 4 June the ABNC received copies of the three signatures for the notes – Huerta as Presidente Interino, Ratner as Secretario de Hacienda (later amended to Agente Financiero (possibly because he was not a Mexican)), and General I. A. Bravo as Secretario de la Guerra, and on 11 June ordered its works to prepare the plates.



Huerta and Ratner



The mock-up shows that these 'Gobierno Federal de la República Mexicana' notes were to be dated 1 August 1915, on Mexican soil. However, on 27 June, as Huerta was travelling by train from New York to El Paso, presumably as the first step towards his coup d'état, he was apprehended and charged with conspiracy to violate U.S. neutrality laws. After some time in the U.S. Army prison at Fort Bliss, he was released on bail but remained under house arrest due to the risk of flight to Mexico. Later he was returned to jail, and while confined, died of cirrhosis of the liver. On 15 November 1915 the ABNC instructed its factory to have all dies and plates placed in its vaults.

## Felix Díaz

Felix Díaz was the nephew of president Porfirio Díaz. Imprisoned by Madero for rebellion, he escaped from jail during the *decena trágica* and was a party to the Pacto de la Embajada, which installed Huerta as President and allowed Díaz to run as presidential candidate on the next election. Huerta did not honour his part of the agreement and ultimately sent Díaz into exile to New York and later Havana.

On 17 December 1914 the ABNC gave Cecilio L. Ocon a quotation for 28,100,000 notes in five denominations from one to a hundred pesos and by January 1915 had prepared models. Ocon was a close personal supporter of Felix Díaz and been involved in the assassination of president Madero: he later was Díaz's financial agent and supported several of his counterrevolutionary attempts. For this reason I believe that this correspondence, though placed in the Huerta folder, refers to a proposed Díaz issue.

In early 1915 the ABNC received orders for notes for the Ejército Reorganizador Nacional, which was the name of Díaz' movement. These were to carry the legend "*Paz y Justicia*"<sup>2</sup> and be signed by the Contador General and Díaz as General en Jefe. The notes stated that they could be redeemed on a New York or San Francisco bank at that rate of 12c U.S. gold for each peso (*por el Banco ... en New York o el Banco ... en San Francisco a razón de doce centavos oro americano por cada peso*), hardly likely to inspire immediate confidence. Nothing came of this order and in February 1916 the ABNC destroyed the models it had made for the 25 centavos and 5 pesos notes. Díaz returned to Mexico in May 1916 as the leader of his Ejército Reorganizador Nacional, but his revolt was unsuccessful.

### **Adolfo de la Huerta**

In December 1923 the firm Vickers, representing some Mexican agency, approached the London office of Bradbury, Wilkinson & Company, an ABNC subsidiary, for a quote for twelve million notes in nine denominations. When informed, the New York office tried to get their agent in Mexico City to find out who was placing the order, and he replied that the enquiry was not from the government or any bank and suggested that it must be coming from Adolfo de la Huerta, in Veracruz. De la Huerta was a Sonora politician who was interim president of Mexico after Carranza's death. In 1923, when president Obregón endorsed Calles as his successor, de la Huerta started a revolt with the support of Catholics, conservatives and disillusioned army officers. Obregón quickly crushed the revolt and forced de la Huerta into exile. This time New York replied to their Mexican agent that "they would not offer to make bank notes for any unrecognized government party".

As I stated above, this is just a cursory review. Though all these efforts were futile and no new notes are out there waiting to be discovered, other details about the political intrigues of these times still need to be filled in.

### **Endnotes:**

1. When the ABNC sold off its archives all the correspondence, deemed worthless, was sent to landfill but some boxes were rescued at the last moment. I am grateful to Rick Ponterio and Stack's Bower and Ponterio for giving me the opportunities to study these files.
2. Strangely, on 19 December 1914 the *New York Times* reported that a new revolutionary movement headed by General José Ines Salazar, recently launched in central Chihuahua, had placed its own currency in circulation. This money, printed in the United States, bore Salazar's signature and the legend 'Peace and Justice' (*Paz y Justicia*). However, Salazar's attorney told the *El Paso Herald*, on 29 December, said that Salazar had not as yet issued any manifesto, and the one recently given publication and credited to him was a fake. "[Salazar] will not issue any fiat money to conduct his revolution. He will conduct it without that, ... If any one tells you that money is being issued in the name of the Salazar revolution, tell him that he lies; it is not true". The activities of the various (and overlapping) counterrevolutionary groups seem to have been confused.



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## THE JEWELLED CROSS SERIES OF 1679-1699 (Part 2)

by Philip Flemming

### The Jeweled Cross Two Escudos

The second denomination in the Jeweled Cross series is the two escudos. It was struck continuously (as far as we know) from 1679 to 1695. Thereafter, the design is found on a single 1697 issue and on an overdate 1698/X issue. The 1697 and 1698 Jeweled escudos may have been struck from dies prepared in those years or possibly with surplus dies produced in 1695 or earlier. The Plain Cross design was introduced in 1695. Dated Jeweled Cross specimens are known for 1680 (two), 1681, 1691, 1692\*, 1695, 1697 and 1698. The 1692 is marked with an asterisk \* because that date is not certain. Tauler 194a, catalogued as a 1693 two escudos, has a 13mm cross and a 24mm planchet. It is a four escudos.

The cross on this denomination is 9mm wide and on well struck issues shows an average of 29 holes. The shield is 10.5 x 13mm. Jeweled Cross two escudos vary considerably in shape but roundish ones average about 20mm. Alan Craig gives the average weight of Fleet-era Mexican two escudos as 6.75gm. Jeweled Cross two escudo in the Gold Cobs Census weighs from 6.75 to 6.78gm.

As explained earlier, it is possible that the first Jeweled Cross dies were prepared before 1679. Certainly the 1679 dies were not retired after one week's use in late December, though they may have been redated for use in 1680. Two and four escudos dated 1680 should be studied for evidence of reworked dates.

Besides the eight dated specimens noted above, fourteen undated specimens, eleven of them recovered by the Real Eight company, are known to the Gold Cobs Census.

### The Jeweled Cross Four Escudos

Jeweled Cross four escudos were struck continuously (as far as we know) from 1679 to 1695. Thereafter, the design is known on a 1698 issue and on an overdate 1699/8/X issue, possibly from dies produced in 1695 or earlier. The Plain Cross design was introduced in 1695.

Dated Jeweled Cross specimens are known for 1680, 1693, 1694 (two), 1695 (three)\*, 1698, and 1699/8/X (two). Some numismatists believe that Tauler 84, listed as one of the 1695s, may actually be a 1696/5 issue. The 1693 four escudos is misclassified as a two escudos in Tauler's *Oro Macuquino*. The cross on the four escudos is 13mm wide and shows an average of 32 holes (at least on well struck issues). The shield is 14 x 17mm.

Jeweled Cross four escudos vary in shape but roundish ones average about 25mm. Alan Craig gives the average weight of Fleet-era Mexican four escudos as 13.52gm. All Jeweled Cross four escudos in the Gold Cobs Census have weighed 13.60gm or more.

Besides the ten dated specimens noted above, nine undated specimens, four of them recovered by the Real Eight Company, are known to the Gold Cobs Census.



*Mexico, 1680, two escudos*



*Mexico, 1680, possibly an overdate?*



*Mexico 1699/8/X four escudos*







*Mexico four escudos  
(Tauler 81)*

### Did Mexico City strike a Plain Cross Four Escudos in 1693?

The Real Eight Company believed they had found one and brought it to auction in November of 1972 as lot 38 in Schulman's SPANISH GALLEON TREASURE (where it fetched an impressive \$1,400). In oversize bold type the Schulman catalog described the coin pictured to the left as a "unique ½ doubloon of (169)3" and as such "the Earliest Dated Mexican Gold Coin in the 1715 Disaster." The definitive catalog of the gold cob coinage, *Oro Macuquino* (2011), reports this information (Tauler 81).

An opportunity to re-examine the coin recently presented itself. The last digit of the date is somewhat hard to read—but clearly it is not a 3. Fortunately, there are two other dated Plain Cross four escudos whose dies match the present coin and confirm its correct dating. To the left is a four escudos in a prominent Mexican collection. Through its date is truncated, we read the bottom of the 695.



*Mexico four escudos 1695*

Another 1695 (Tauler 84) shows a full three digit date. Tauler reads this date as 1695, though it appears that the last digit may be an overdate, possibly a 6/5. In any case, Tauler 81 is not 1693 issue, but a media onza struck with a shield die cut in 1695 and perhaps reused in 1696. Plain Cross issues began in 1695, not 1693.



*Mexico four escudos 1695/6  
(Tauler 84)*



*Mexico eight escudos (16)94/2*

### The Jeweled Cross Eight Escudos

The Jeweled Cross eight escudos was likely struck from 1679 to 1695 without interruption. No dated example exists after 1695 but at least one onza with a Jeweled Cross pairs with a dated 1697/6 shield (Florida State Collection # 11.00230). Plain cross designs were introduced in 1695. Dated specimens are known for 1691(two), 1694/2, and 1695.

The cross on this design is 15.5mm wide and on well struck coins shows an average of 34 holes. The shield is 16 x 20mm. Jeweled Cross eight escudos vary in shape but roundish ones average a large 35-36mm. Alan Craig gives the average weight of Fleet-era Mexican eight escudos as 26.75gm. The Jeweled Cross eight escudos in the Gold Cobs Census range from 26.6 to 27.1gm.

Besides the four dated specimens noted above, nine undated specimens, three of them recovered by The Real Eight Company, are known to the Gold Cobs Census.

## Barely Jeweled Escudos: the final Jeweled Cross Issues?

Recently the Jeweled Cross onza pictured below came to auction. At first glance we might think it just has a worn cross die from which much detail has been lost. Not so. Careful examination of the cross side reveals that the die was in good condition. The reason why most of the holes in the cross are missing is that they were never punched into the



die. And the ones that are present are ill spaced and badly mispunched. It is hard to count but perhaps 13 of the normal 34 holes are present. Was a very hung-over die sinker just having a bad day? Even on the one and two escudos Jeweled Cross issues there was usually care taken to fully "jewel" the cross.

A single issue like this by itself would need no further explanation, but it is now clear that there exists a group of these "barely jeweled" escudos in all denominations. None of these yet has offered a clear date

to securely anchor the group, but by style they are 1690s issues, most like the 1694-95 issues. One possible explanation for this group is that as we approached the inauguration of the Plain Cross issues in 1695 it was no longer felt necessary to carefully and fully "jewel" the cross. The concerns that had mandated the selection of the very distinctive Mexican Jeweled Cross 20 years earlier may have no longer been felt. A second factor pushing for an ad hoc simplification of the dies could have been the high mintage of 1694-95. In 1695 Mexico City minted nearly 300,000 pesos in gold, approximately six times the average mintages of the 1680s and early 1690s. Mexico City was no doubt pushed to produce enough dies to accommodate this ballooning coinage. If these barely jeweled cross dies were engraved at late notice in 1694 or early 1695, when completely plain crosses were about to go into production, there would have been no compelling reason for an over-busy die cutter to finish a jeweled cross in traditional detail. This view would have us regard these "barely jeweled" crosses as the last stage in a process of cross simplification that led to (or paralleled) the completely plain crosses first manufactured in 1695. This view is probably correct, but until we have a dated (or die matched) example of the barely jeweled coinage, it also remains possible that these coins were struck from dies produced 1696-99, simultaneously with fully jeweled and plain issues of that period. Purely stylistic factors do not compel us to date these coins to 1694-95.

## When did the Jeweled Cross series end?

We do not know whether Jeweled Cross dies were manufactured after 1695, when Plain Cross dies were introduced. That Mexico City simultaneously produced jeweled, partially jeweled, and plain cross dies for five years would be unprecedented if the mint saw these as distinct series. The Jeweled Cross dies used on 1695-99 escudos could all be surplus dies from the big coinage of 1694-95, pressed back into service when current dies failed, but there are problems with this view. The years 1696-99 all saw a substantial gold coinage at the 200,000 peso per year level. If there were surplus 1695 dies, we would expect them to be used (and used up) in the first years of that period. But instead we see crisp two and four escudos fully jeweled dies coming into use with the 1698 and 1699 coinage. Moreover, most of the surviving Mexican escudos datable to 1695-99 are Jeweled Cross issues. Are we to believe that Mexico City struck most of its substantial gold coinage for four years with surplus dies?

A full account of the changes that took place in the Mexican gold coinage in the period 1695-1700 is a complicated business. It would be gratifying if we could say, unifying the complexities, that there is a general tendency to move toward a simpler design. Once the jewels are gone, the arms and crossbars of the cross tend to get thinner. Once the crossbar have become as thin as the tressure lines, it becomes simpler to connect crossbar and surrounding tressure into the rectangular boxes we are familiar with on the classical Box-End Cross issues of 1700-1710. The problem with this story is that changes just mentioned do not occur in 1695 or gradually over the 1695-99 period. They appear abruptly in 1700. The only change datable to 1695 is the appearance of the plain cross. Tressure, fleurs, and the shape of the cross remain the same until 1700. Below is the Plain Cross Royal of 1695. Notice how similar it is in all other features of the cross side to later Jeweled Cross issues. There is no hint of a classic Box-End Cross. Compare the 1695 Royal with



the Box-End Royal of 1702. Notice how much has changed by 1702 in the cross and tressure and fleurs. These changes originate in 1700.



*Mexico, 1695, eight escudos Royal*



*Mexico, 1702, eight escudos Royal*

The conclusion to which we are led is that Mexico City did not undertake a deliberate design change in 1695 (and was not aware it had affected one). The Plain Cross series of 1695-99 is explained by the fact that Mexico City acquired a set of new cross punches in 1695. On the new cross punches the arms and crossbars were too thin to “jewel”. The older thicker cross punches were not yet exhausted and continued to be used as well. Probably as late as 1699 thick and thin cross punches were both still being used to prepare gold dies. Some thick crosses were jeweled in traditional fashion and some only in a token partial fashion (as production schedules allowed). The Mexico City talladors did this without thinking they were simultaneously producing two or three different styles of coinage. Finally, in 1700 a deliberate design change did occur with the Box-End Cross replacing forever the Jeweled and Plain Crosses.

### **Some Observations on Collecting the Jeweled Cross Series**

The rarity of this series was first noted in the pre-Fleet monographs of Lopez-Chavez Y Sanchez (1961-63). Since 1963 salvages of the 1715 Fleet have contributed new coins to the point where perhaps 80-90% of the Jeweled Cross coinage now comes from the Fleet. Unfortunately, that source now seems exhausted. Only a few Jeweled Cross escudos have come to Division in the last 30 years. We are left with a very small coinage to study and collect: four dated Jeweled Cross onzas are known to our census, eight media onzas, and eight two escudos. In all, 27 dated Jeweled Cross escudos anchor the entire series spanning 21 years. (Six of these coins are impounded in state collections and permanently unavailable to collectors.)

A significant infusion of new Jeweled Cross coinage would be very welcome. Alas, nothing is on the horizon. A Mexican *aviso* lost while carrying payroll in the early 1690s is known but lies in a National Park. No commercial salvage of that vessel or a similar “lost” 1715 ship seems possible. The Vigo Bay wrecks of the 1702 Fleet have now been put off limits to salvage by the Spanish government. Several promising wrecks lie in the territorial waters of other governments that are now adamantly opposed to any commercial salvage of Spanish Colonial wrecks. There the matter rests for now.

Without the time capsules that shipwrecks provide, the survival of low mintage gold issues becomes quite problematic. If Pradeau’s numbers are correct, a typical 1680s gold mintage was 50,000 pesos. From the entire period of 1679-1690 it could be that just four dated Jeweled Cross escudos and 6-8 undated coins survive. Compute the survival rate if you like tiny fractions. Gold production at Mexico City spiked in 1694-1695. 299,200 pesos, four times that of the average 1680s mintage, were struck in 1695. Thanks to the 1715 Fleet, we now have a grand total of eight dated Jeweled Cross specimens from 1694-95 (and possibly a dozen more undated escudos). Not big populations!

From the perspective of having a decent supply for interested collectors, the surviving population of Jeweled Cross escudos remains disheartening small. As a comparison, consider the surviving population of 1714 Mexican two escudos. There are hundreds more 1714 two escudos than all the denominations of Jeweled Cross escudos combined. Likewise, there are more 1714 Mexican onzas than all Jeweled Cross denominations combined. The point is, unless we get lucky with an unexpected wreck or hoard, collectors and students of the first series of Mexican gold must be very patient people.

## Appendix: Dated Jeweled Cross Escudos known to the Gold Cobs Census (Oct. 2012)

The Gold Cobs Census, now more than 20 years old and going strong, is an attempt to record the surviving Spanish Colonial escudos held privately and in public collections. For a rare series like the Jeweled Cross issues of 1679-1699, this is a practical undertaking because the numbers are small. Our coverage of gold cobs at auction in the last 50 years is reasonably comprehensive. Division reports from the State of Florida record over 6,500 gold cobs reported to the state by 1715 Fleet salvors since 1963. Private salvage reports from The Real Eight Company and other groups supplement the state reports. The late Lou Ullian was of great assistance in refining and confirming Fleet coin populations. No doubt some important escudos remain uncounted, but the infrequency with which we now add new coins to the census suggests that our count is not far off the mark.

Date	8 escudos	4 escudos	2 escudos	1 escudo
1679				
1680		1	2	
1681			1	
1682				
1683				
1684				
1685				
1686				
1687				
1688				
1689				1
1690				
1691	2*		1	
1692			1*	
1693		1		
1694	1 (4/2 overdate)	2		1*
1695	1	2	1	
1696				
1697			1	1
1698		1	3	4
1699		1 (9/8/X overdate)		
1700				
Totals	4	8	10	7

Issues marked \* are unconfirmed. At least one 1691 onza seem likely to be confirmed.

### Photo Credits:

All coin images are courtesy of Rafael Tauler Fesser, whose magnificent on-line archive *Escudos Macuquinos Imperio Espanol* supplements his definitive print volume *Oro Macuquino: Catalogo Imperio Espanol 1474 a 1756* (2011).



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**MEXICO FERDINAND VI  
8 ESCUDO**  
1747 MO MF NGC AU55 KM#149

In 1747 new dies were prepared for Ferdinand VI following the passing of Philip V. Lacking a portrait of Ferdinand VI, an "imaginary" bust was prepared known affectionately as the "cave man" bust. This one-year style is the key to a colonial 8 escudo type set and is unique to the Mexico City mint. Our coin is unusually well struck with light adjustment marks typical of the type. A perfect type coin, which was not present in the Millennia Collection, while the Eliasberg collection contained an inferior AU53. NGC has only graded one coin higher at AU58. Price on Request.



**MEXICO 1949  
MORELOS PESO**  
NGC MS65 KM#456

This is one of the key coins for collectors of 20th Century coinage. While some 4,000,000 coins were supposedly minted, nearly all were melted and the surviving coins are widely sought after, especially in high grade. This gem coin is one of three that NGC has graded MS65. Priced at \$5,500.



**MEXICO PHILIP V  
8 ESCUDO**  
1742 MO MF NGC MS62 KM#148

A superb coin! Fully struck with semi proof like fields and great eye appeal. A perfect type coin for Philip V. Milled coinage began in 1732 at Mexico City and milled 8 escudos of Philip V were minted for 16 years from 1732-1747. Freshly graded by NGC and currently "Top Pop" as the single MS62 example. Price on Request.



**MEXICO 1921 TWO PESO**  
PCGS MS65 KM#462

This one year type coin was struck to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the independence of Mexico. A similar designed coin was also struck in Gold as a 50 peso in the same year. This high grade example is priced at \$1,600.



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