

THE 1867 SLP QUARTILLA OVERSTRIKE

By Ben Nibert, R-303

An interesting but often overlooked Mexican state copper coin is the 1867 San Luis Potosi ¼ real (KM361) which is sometimes found struck over a 1863 SLP one centavo (KM390.1). This overstrike is not mentioned in the Krause guide but is noted in the Buttrey-Hubbard *Guidebook of Mexican Coins*. There may be more of these in existence then collectors suspect. A guess is that possibly one in twenty may be an over strike. Indeed some collectors in Mexico feel the true ratio to be even less, but with many examples showing little or no hint of the under strike. The mintage of the quartilla is 3,176,704 while that of the centavo is 1,024,813, which may hint at the possibilities of this combination.

The illustrated coin measures 27.0 mm and weights 9.7 grams. Edge reeding is relatively fine, consistent with the quartilla series, rather than the coarse reeding of the centavos. This author has another example (not shown) that is oriented 90 degrees from the under strike, is the same diameter and clearly shows part of the engravers name, Sanabria.

Why did this overstrike come into existence? Possibly there were large numbers of the centavo that did not enter circulation due to the French intervention. These "left overs" were eventually used in 1867 when the decimal system was temporarily set aside, conceivably in reaction to its use by the second Empire. This issue was produced in accordance with the decree of March 15, 1861 which established the metric system and made the centavo the only copper coin (article 7), and the local decree of June 17, 1863 which was to exchange quartillas for centavos. While the Quartilla seems like a throw back to the old Reales, the design and legends may have served as a political statement. The 1861 decimal law was officially ratified on November 27, 1867 which once and for all established the metric system. At any rate we see the return of the decimals in SLP in 1868 with the five and ten centavos. The next SLP decimal copper was the scarce issue of the 1871 centavo. For whatever reason they came to be struck, these quartillas reward sharp eyed collectors and make interesting additions to any collection.

I welcome comments on this or any Mexican state coin: I can be reached by email, bennibert@hotmail.com or phone (956) 668-7323.

The 1867 SLP Quartilla Overstrike, Con't:



A Typical SLP centavo which became
The planchet for many quartilla overstrikes.



The base of Liberty shows
As does the fasces on the
left. Photos are about 2X
magnification.



Part of the wreath,
centavo and date of
the under coin show
Clearly. This over-
strike is oriented 180
degrees from the
original. Some of the
circles on the coin
are the original
berries that were
flattened and enlarged
during the over
striking.