

THE REVOLUTION CORNER

by Joe Flores, C-2

CHIHUAHUA-PARRAL 1 PESO, G.B. 80

This little bit of research was started when a very rare coin showed up at an auction sale.

I always like to carry photos of extremely rare coins that are seldom seen or offered by cataloguers or dealers. As collectors and dealers, we depend on photos as one of the ways of identifying coins. Most Mexican Revolution coin collectors in the U.S. use *Mexican Revolutionary Coinage 1913-1917*, published by Hugh S. Guthrie and Merrill Bothamley in 1976. It is better known as the "GB" book. While this remains the most complete book for this era of coinage, we should thank all the previous authors in Mexico and the U.S.A.

I have been searching for examples of the Chihuahua Parral one peso (G.B. 80) for many years. In 1987, Mr. Richard A. Long, in his sale 79, auctioned a very important collection, that of Sr. Antonio Karam Kalifa. Lot #442 was the finest known specimen of this coin. Now there are two of these rarities. When I saw the photo in the sale catalog, I had doubts of its authenticity. Mr. Long did mention that there was a difference between these two coins. Folds on the caps do not match between the one in the G.B. book and the one in the sale. Were there two dies for this very rare coin? Now I was really confused (see *Photo #1*).

A good friend suggested that the G.B. book was in error. I telephoned the A.N.S. to ask if they had a photo or slide of the coin that they house in their museum. They very kindly mailed me a slide. That answered all my questions. The photo in the G.B. book for coin G.B. 80 was flipped, making the folds of the cap appear to flow in a different direction (see *Photo #2*).

Last year a good friend from Mexico called and told me he had located a G.B. 80 peso but was not sure if it was genuine. He e-mailed to me an image of his new find. Most scans of coins are too blurry to use for authentication, but he assured me that it was not a cast coin. He agreed to hold the coin for me for my inspection and I would have the first option to purchase the coin. All this happened in October 2001. I got hold of the coin and to my delight it was a genuine. I wanted to bring the coin back at that time but the owner of the coin wanted to display it in his exhibit of Mexican Revolution rarities in February 2002. I wanted to put a deposit on the coin to seal the deal, but he would not accept any money, only our word and a handshake. Now there are three of these coins.

In the June 3, 1996, Spink sold the Pablo Gerber collection. Lot #356 was a Bolita peso (G.B. 78) struck over a G.B. 80. I am happy to say it is now in my collection but when I purchased the coin I was not sure of the host coin's authenticity. After some research, I found that the dies of this coin are identical to the others, making it a genuine specimen, now there are four of these coins (see *Photo #3*).

In May of this year I made a special trip to Mexico to pick up this rare coin as it fits very well in my collection, and all the caps flow in the same direction (see *Photo #4*).

In my opinion, the striking of the G.B. 80 was done during or after the Parral 50 centavos G.B. 77, then the Bolita peso, G.B. 78, followed by the common Parral peso, G.B. 79.

Joe Flores, C-2
P. O. Box 4484
Stockton, CA 95204-4604
E-mail pepéf@msn.com
Phone (209) 462-0759

PHOTO # 1

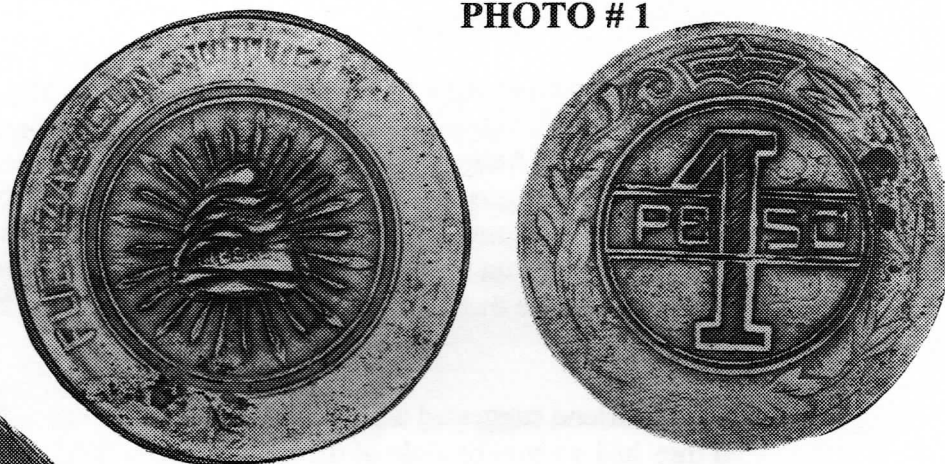


PHOTO # 2

American Numismatic Society
File Photo 1936.114.4





PHOTO #3



Photo #4

