

FANTASY TOKENS FROM GUADALAJARA

Reported by Clyde Hubbard, C-127

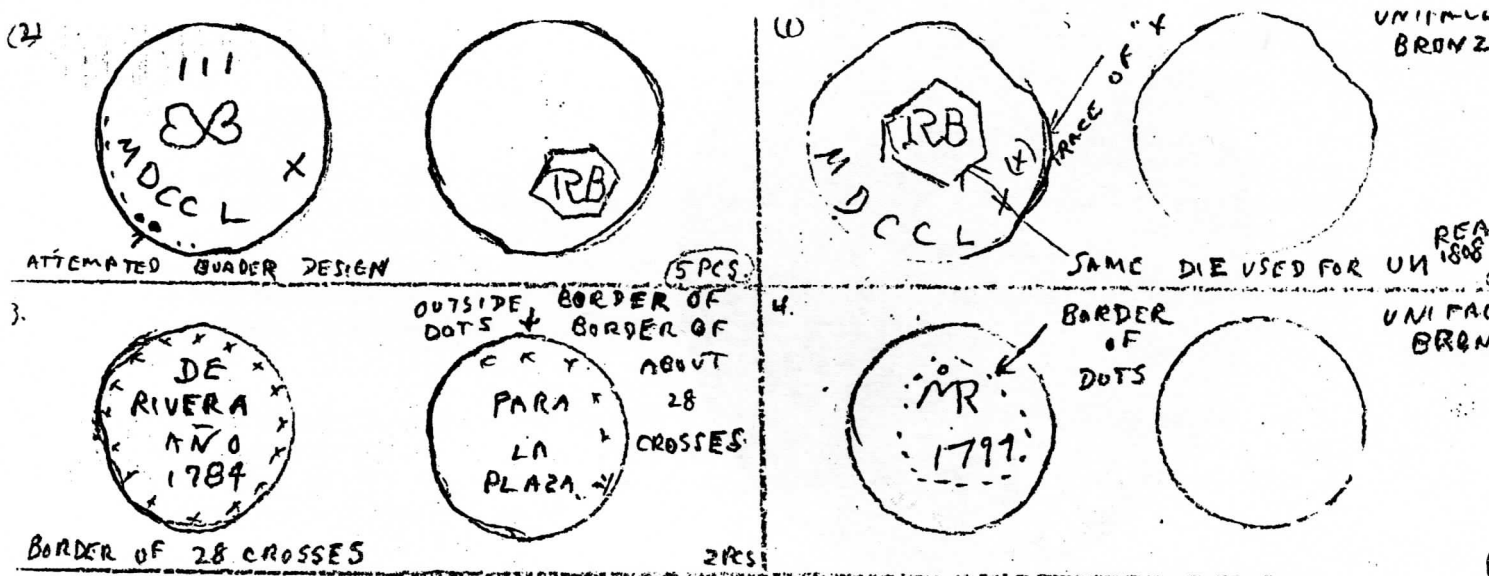
These fantasy Hacienda and Municipal tokens showed up at the Sunday Guadalajara market sometime in 1976 - 1977, but thus far no one has indicated who manufactured these. These fantasies are not cast, but are struck from dies, probably made in Guadalajara. This is only a sampling of the total, which numbered in the hundreds. All seem to be fantasies, many of them dated. As far as Clyde Hubbard can determine the die maker did not exactly imitate any genuine tokens. The tokens illustrated are in bronze, copper, brass, lead and silver.

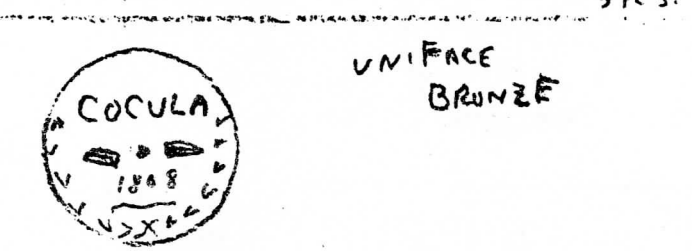
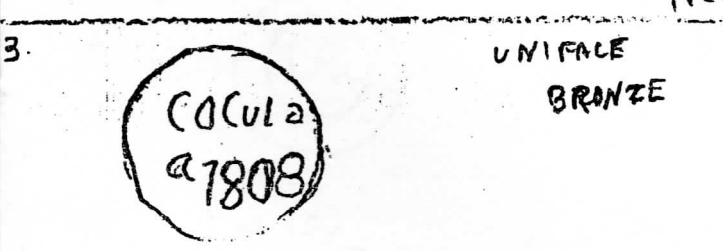
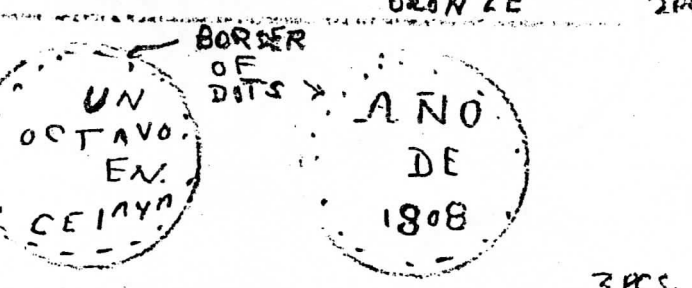
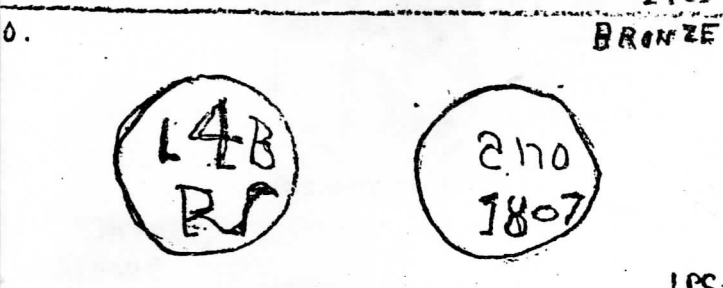
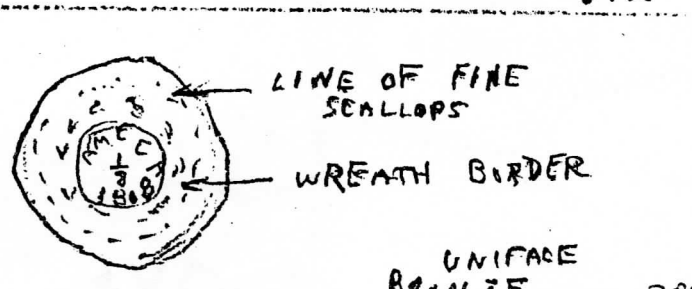
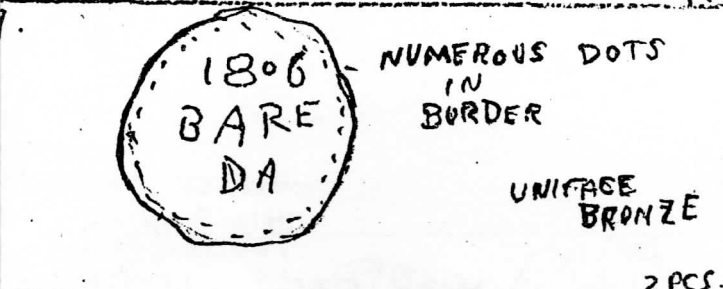
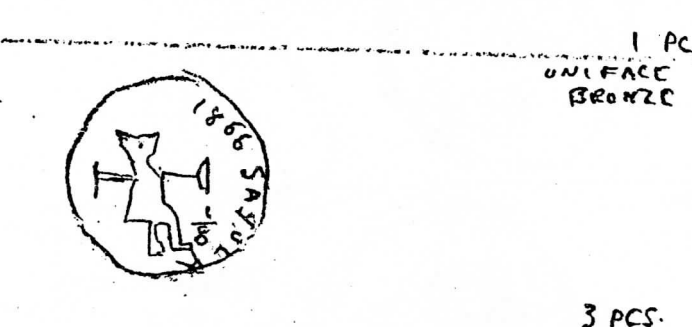
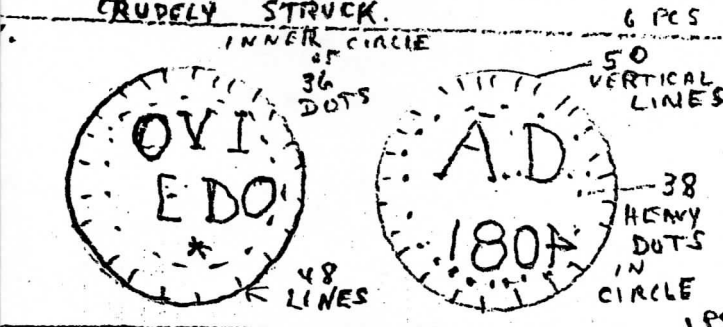
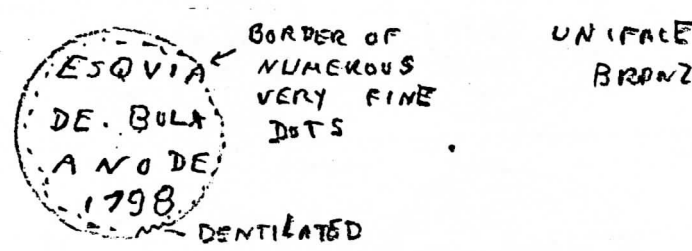
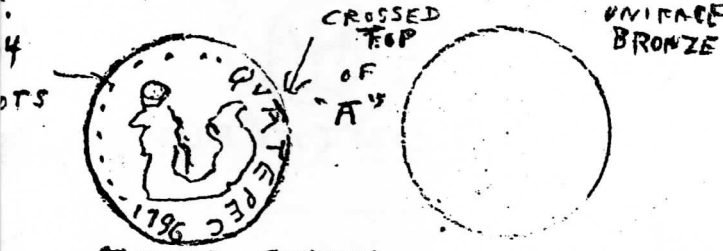
Repeated efforts to determine who made these have been unsuccessful. Some of these have showed up in U.S. auction catalogs, and some appear (as supurious) in Russ Rulau's "Latin American Tokens". Once you have seen a few you can pretty well identify the workmanship.

This information, and the line drawings were done by Clyde back in early 1981, from examples in the Sociedad Numismatica de Mexico collection, that were donated by Sr. Carlos Rivera M. This article is a starting point to getting this information out in the Mexican numismatic field. Anyone having additional information, or has photos of these fantasies please let the Association know, and we will share the information with our readers.

The Editor has been exposed to some of these back about that period, while living in Yuma, Arizona. He had a small coin shop, and a gentleman from northern Mexico, who would not identify himself, offered a coffee can half full with tokens such as these to another dealer, who told him to take them to the Editor. He refused, but the other dealer was able to keep them over night, and when they were examined it was concluded that they were not real. We still attempted to buy them to get them off the market, but a deal could not be made, and they left. No one else in town was offered them, nor were there any reports of this being offered to other dealers or collectors in the state. The story that went with them was that these were discovered on a ledge in a cave in Sonora.

The Association appreciates Clyde's sharing of this information, this is what the Association is all about, the sharing of numismatic and historical information.





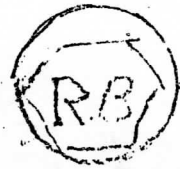
12



(JEE #1)

BRONZE

13



ALSO IN COPPER

16



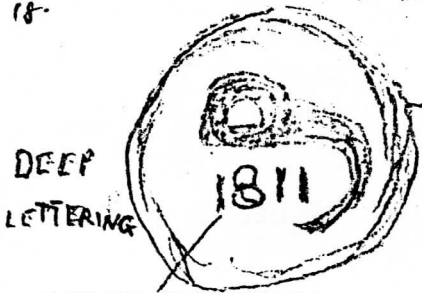
TOTAL 10 (18 BERRIES)

SILVER; REEDED EDGE (NOT FILED OBV+R)

17



18



2 PCS

THICK CRUDE

HIGH RIM UNIFACE BRONZE

19



UNIFACE BRONZE

1 THICK 1 THIN PIECE

20



1 PC

THICK BRONZE

21



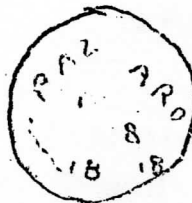
UNIFACE BRONZE THIN PLANCHET INDISTINCT LETTERING

22



UNIFACE BRONZE

23



(PAZCUARO)

UNIFACE BRONZE

24



UNIFACE BRONZE

1 THICK 1 THIN

(2 PCS.)

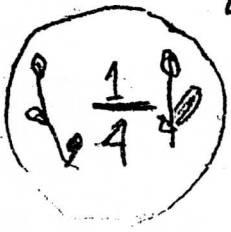
12

25



BRONZE

26



LEAD 27.



UNIFACE BRONZE

28. BORDER OF CIRCLES



1 PC. BRONZE

30.



1 PC. BRONZE

2 PCS

(M) UNICIPAL ID (AD)

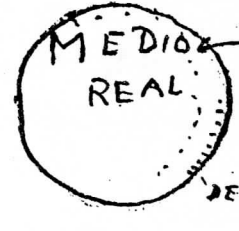
29

BRONZE



1 PC.

31.



BRONZE

WREATH

FINE DOTS

DENTELATED

1 PC

32.

UNIFACE BRONZE



EAGLE

2 PCS

33.



BRONZE

1 PC

34.

BRONZE



(DOUBLE STRIKE)

1 PC

36.

UNIFACE BRONZE



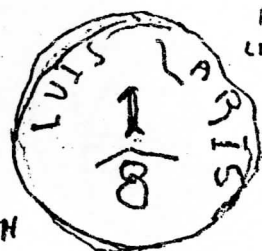
1 PC

35.

FINE LETTERING



WREATH



2 PCS

37.

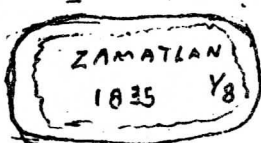
UNIFACE BRONZE



1 PC

38.

UNIFACE
BRONZE

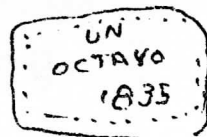


39



BORDER OF 63 DOTS

BRONZE

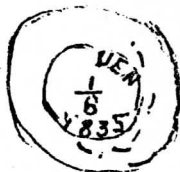


BORDER OF 61 DOTS

1 PC

40.

UNIFACE
BRONZE



41.

UNIFACE
BRONZE



CIRCLE OF 19 DOTS

42.

4 BRONZE



ENGLE
ON
CACTUS

1 HAS REEDED EDGE WITH STRS
BRONZE

43.

UNIFACE
BRONZE



44.

BRONZE



ENGLE



1 PC

45.

BRONZE



WREATH
BORDER



46.

UNIFACE
BRONZE



47.

UNIFACE BRONZE



1 THICK
1 THIN

1 PC

MILLED EDGE

2 PCS.

48.

BRONZE



BORDER
OF CURVED LINES.



1 PIECE HAS
CRUDE EDGE MILLING
3 PCS

49.

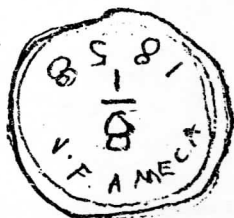
UNIFACE
BRONZE



THICK +
THIN
PIECES

5 PCS

50.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

51.



2 IN LIGHT COPPER
3 - DARK

52.



1 PC
BRONZE

53



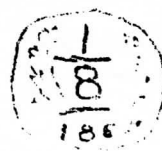
5 PCS
BRONZE

54



1 PC

55



1 PC

56.

HIGH
RM



UNIFACE
BRONZE

57.

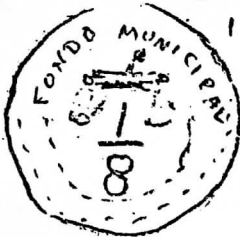


UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC

2 PCS

58.



3 BRONZE
1 LEAD.

1 PC

59



32 "TEETH"
ALSO "TEETH"
ON REVERSE.

11

60.

ENGLE



BRONZE

THICK
WREATH

4 PCS

61



UNIFACE
BRONZE

ATTEMPTED EDGE MILLING.

1 PC

2 PCS

62.



2 BRONZE
1 BRASS
ES(QUI)NA

3 PCS.

63.



(GUADALAJARA)
UNIFACE
BRONZE

64.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC.

65.



66.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

2 PCS

67.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

(VAR.)

3 PCS

68.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC.

69.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

2 PCS

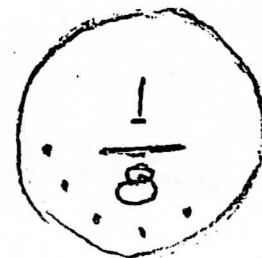
70.



UNIFACE
BRONZE
INCUSE DESIGN
&
LETTERING

1 PC.

71.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC.

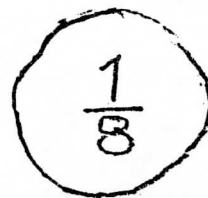
72.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC.

73.



LEAD

1 PC.

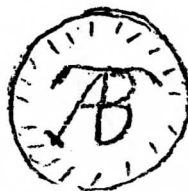
74.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC.

75.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC

76.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

4 PCS.

77.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC

78.



UNIFACE
LEAD

1 PC.

79.



UNIFACE
BRONZE
DEPRESSED
TRIANGLE

1 PC

80.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

81.



1 BRASS
1 COPPER
1 BRONZE

3 PCS

82.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

83.



84.



BRONZE

1 PC.

FILE MARKS ON EDGE

85



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC

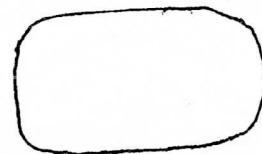
86.



UNIFACE
LEAD

1 PC.

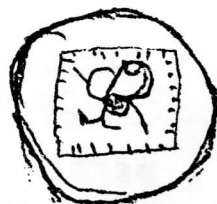
87



UNIFACE
BRONZE
IN
3 SIZES

3 PCS.

88.



UNIFACE
COPPER
(THICK)

1 PC.

89.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC

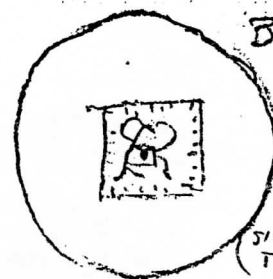
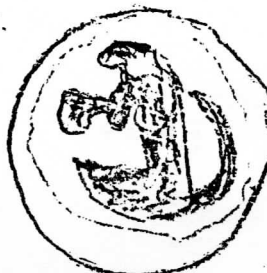
90.



UNIFACE
BRONZE

1 PC.

91.



BRONZE

(SIMILAR
TO #88)



FRAUDULENT TOKENS REAPPEAR IN GUADALAJARA

By Russell Rulau, reprinted from the October 2000 *World Coin News*

Fake and fantasy Mexican tokens are once more being produced in Guadalajara, Mexico, according to numismatic observers in Guadalajara, Cuernavaca and Mexico City.

A spat of imitations manufactured in the same area plagued U.S. and Mexican markets in the 1970s. The 1970s concoctions are described and illustrated in the 1992 and 2000 editions of my catalog, *Latin American Tokens*.

Though it was reported about 10 years ago that the Guadalajara forger had died in police custody, Mexican specialist Clyde Hubbard recently said, "he still breathes and fabricates." What's more, Hubbard reports, the forger's style has improved to the point where his output is dangerous.

As the author of *Latin American Tokens*, I constantly monitor reports of dangerous forgeries. On Aug 10 at the Philadelphia ANA convention, Hubbard gave me excellent color photographs of 70 different imitations of Mexican Colonial and Early Republic period (1750-1840) "tlacos," as these crude copper tokens are known.

Readers of *Numismatic News* were warned of this situation – without illustrations – in the Aug. 1 edition on page 24. At that time I requested that Hubbard and other Mexican specialists send me specimens or photos for a warning to the collecting public.

Coin dealers in Mexican cities are reportedly now selling these fakes, as fakes, at about U.S. \$2 each. Genuine *tlacos* would bring from \$10 to \$100 each for common varieties, and even at wholesale would trade at a minimum of \$6. Honest dealers make no effort to mislead customers, Hubbard stated. Both Hubbard and Arthur Garnett of Oregon, another expert in fake Mexican tokens, warned that it is only a matter of time before the new products are offered throughout Latin America, the United States and Europe, as genuine pieces.

The forgers have learned many lessons since 1970. They no longer "heat treat" sheet copper to appear aged after striking from deliberately crude dies. They now use thick copper blanks of varying sizes, frequently casting the pieces in molds the way many originals were made, and then chemically induce the green patina of age called verdigris to resemble long burial in earth.

If colonial or Early Republic Mexican tokens are offered, potential buyers should look for several clues:

Wear. Avoid pieces that lack evidence of circulation. Uncirculated tlacos do not appear on the market.

Color. If made of copper, avoid pieces that look heat-treated. These appear streaky brownish-red. If green verdigris is present, try chipping it off; patina has strong surface tension.

Many words in the inscription. Genuine pieces usually carry one to three words and a design.

Cost. If the seller wants less than \$10 for a token, be suspicious. If he asks under \$5, don't buy it. Distress sales of tlacos in back alleys do not occur; genuine pieces are far too scarce.

Most coin dealers and coin club libraries have a copy of *Latin American Tokens*. Compare the offered item with a pictured item, and if they differ, err on the side of caution. The new second edition (June 2000) has a large number of illustrations of early tokens, but the first (1992) edition also carries many illustrations for comparison purposes.

Twelve forgeries currently offered in Mexico are illustrated with this report.¹ These represent only a sampling of the fakes. The Esquia de Bola 1798 tlaco of Mexico City would be worth \$200 in VF if genuine, but the forger made a mistake – he put the date as 1798, while genuine pieces (Rulau DF 100 and 101) are dated only as 98, with the 17 understood. Forgers it seems, often try to “improve” on reality

Please do not send suspected fake tlacos to *World Coin News*. The staff does not have time to devote to this activity. However, written reports of fake pieces offered are welcomed.

A special thanks to Russell Rulau, World Coin News and Clyde Hubbard for this information.



In the 1970's the Guadalajara forger copied illustrations from books. In 2000 he is using techniques used to make originals, casting thick copper flans, then “aging” chemically with fake verdigris (green patina). All his work is “too good,” as the fakes exhibit no wear from circulation. This plate of three bogus pieces displays monogram-like brand marks. (All photos courtesy of Clyde Hubbard, Cuernavaca.)

¹ See plates for article on page 21 & 22.



In the 1970's the Guadalajara forger copied illustrations from books. In 2000 he is using techniques used to make originals, casting thick copper flans, then "aging" chemically with fake verdigris (green patina). All his work "too good," as the fakes exhibit no wear from circulation. This plate of three bogus pieces displays monogram-like brand marks. (All photos courtesy of Clyde Hubbard, Cuernavaca)



The Guadalajara forger's technique in producing bogus Mexican tokens of the Colonial and Early Republican period has improved to the point where collectors must be careful in buying these pieces from anyone but expert dealers. Shown here are quite convincing fakes of Taretan 1833, Ameca 1809, Pareda 1806, Lh Ca 1813, Sayula 1806 and Esquia de Bola 1798 in copper. All were produced in Mexico in 2000 and sold there for about \$2 each.