

# Gold in Revolutionary Coins

*In those struck in the State of Guerrero in 1914 and 1915*

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*Translation by J. E. HALLIDAY*

In the unhappy times we lived in back in 1914 and 1915, the revolutionary leaders had to face up to the serious problem of the lack of coin for the payment of supplies, etc. In view of this the urgent need, the groups who successfully occupied certain Royalist mines where these were stocks of unrefined gold and silver alloys decided to strike coins with them. They probably knew that there was gold in these alloys and therefore thought that if they let this be known the coins would be better accepted. This seems to me to be more likely than to suppose gold was added intentionally for nobody would have been able to detect the gold at all easily since in small quantities gold does not colour the silver.

On these revolutionary coins appears ORO: 0.300 on the peso pieces and ORO: 0.595 on the two peso coins. I was never able to get any satisfactory answers to my questions and therefore decided to make my own investigation, but not before having consulted the opinion of the Mexican Numismatic Society at one of its regular meetings.

The Society authorized me on August 1st. 1955 and I began the little research. The coins had to be destroyed but a small piece was kept. Before going into details I wish to thank Mr. Carlos T. Martínez, a member of the Society and Director of the Mint in Mexico City who attended the meeting at which I read my paper. He most kindly offered to corroborate the results of my analysis and arranged to have this done in the Mint's laboratories. They confirmed my figures and therefore support the conclusions at which I had arrived. Four coins were destroyed, given by Messrs. Rufino Lavin, Bernardo López Velasco and myself; two of one peso and two of two pesos.

## *Brief Description of the Coins.*

I am using the positions of the numbers on the face of an ordinary watch to describe where features occur — a method not yet approved by the Society — and supplementing this with the details of the table of results.

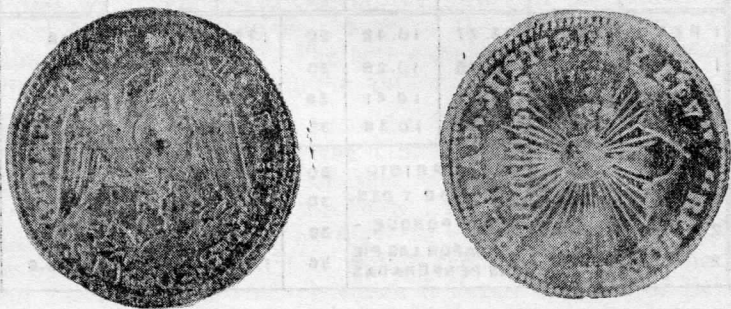
**Coins of One Peso — Obverse.** The National coat of arms of a facing eagle. Immediately below and between seven and five o'clock the words *UN PESO* preceded by a five pointed star. From nine to three, and surrounding the coat of arms is the legend *República Mexicana* below a line of dots. **Reverse.** A liberty cap surrounded by a sun burst enclosed in a wreath with one dot at eleven and another at two o'clock. Between these dots ORO. 300 in a horizontal line with *GRO* immediately above. Enclosing these inscriptions below a line of dots in the legend *Reforma, Libertad, Justicia y Ley* from seven to five o'clock, passing through twelve, with the date 1914 at

six. The edge of this piece is milled with fine lines perpendicular to the faces of the coin.

The one peso piece of 1915 has the same obverse but the reverse is different in that above *ORO: 0.300* there is a small five pointed star and a *G* above the first zero (which as we shall see is most significant) whilst *GRO* is replaced by *TAXCO, GRO*.



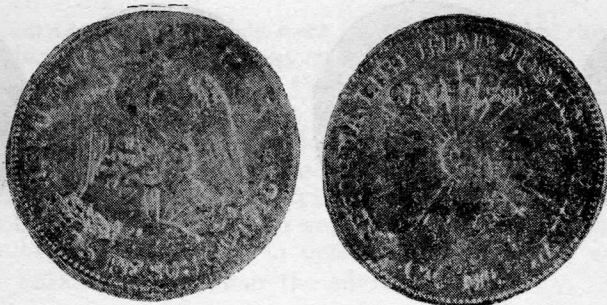
*Coins of Two Pesos, Obverse.* The national coat of arms of a facing eagle. Below this and between eight and four o'clock the legend *Dos Pesos, GRO, 1914* preceded by a five pointed star. The coat of arms is encircled by *República Mexicana* running from nine to three o'clock just inside a line of small and closely spaced dots. *Reverse.* A shining sun with a little cloud to the right above a range of three mountains of which the central one is the most prominent. A margin of dots and immediately below, between com-



mas, the legend "*Reforma, Libertad, Justicia y Ley*" starting from seven and ending at five o'clock after passing twelve. Above the sun and in a horizontal line *ORO: 0.595*.

The two Peso piece of 1915 has the same obverse whilst the reverse has a difference in that the mountains are less prominent than in the coin of 1914 and below them is *C<sup>o</sup>M<sup>o</sup>* (initials of Campo Morado). These details are supplemented by the following table.

*Conclusions.* ORO: 300 and ORO 0.595 do not indicate the gold fineness in milligrams but probably the content in each coin (approximately 0.257 and 0.486 grms. in those of 1914 of one and two pesos). ORO 0.300 on the one peso piece of 1915 has no justification whatsoever and is a pure lie since the gold fineness is 0.003 (3 milligrams) and the content in the coin is 0.039 (39 milligrams). It is curious to note in the table that the densities



| RESULTADOS        | VALOR DE LA PIEZA | AÑO DE EMISION | PESO EN GRAMOS                 | DENSIDAD | MODULO        | ESPESOR | MILESIMOS DE PLATA | MILESIMOS ORO | CONTENIDO EN ORO EN GRAMOS EN MONEDA |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|----------|---------------|---------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
|                   |                   |                |                                |          | EN MILIMETROS |         |                    |               |                                      |
| B. EGUIA<br>L I S | 1 PESO            | 1914           | 14.27                          | 10.42    | 30            | 1.75    |                    | 18            | 0.257                                |
|                   | 1 "               | 1915           | 12.96                          | 10.29    | 30            | 2       |                    | 3             | 0.039                                |
|                   | 2 PESOS           | 1914           | 24.31                          | 10.41    | 39            | 2       |                    | 20            | 0.486                                |
|                   | 2 "               | 1915           | 23.40                          | 10.38    | 39            | 1.75    |                    | 17            | 0.398                                |
| CASA DE<br>MONEDA | 1 PESO            | 1914           | SE SUPRIMIO                    |          | 30            | 1.75    | 890.2              | 18.0          |                                      |
|                   | 1 "               | 1915           | EL PESO Y DEN.                 |          | 30            | 2       | 825.4              | 3.2           |                                      |
|                   | 2 PESOS           | 1914           | SIDAD PORQUE -                 |          | 39            | 2       | 884.1              | 20.3          |                                      |
|                   | 2 "               | 1915           | LLEGARON LAS PIEZAS PERFORADAS |          | 39            | 1.75    | 884.1              | 16.8          |                                      |

of the coins with similar finenesses of gold and silver are similar. The density has also been altered by the presence of gold. On the table there is no density higher than 10.33 even for finenesses of issues of 0.900.

I place these tables at the disposition of the Society and would ask the reader of these lines to appreciate that I write them through the wish to serve the Mexican Numismatic Society and its members.