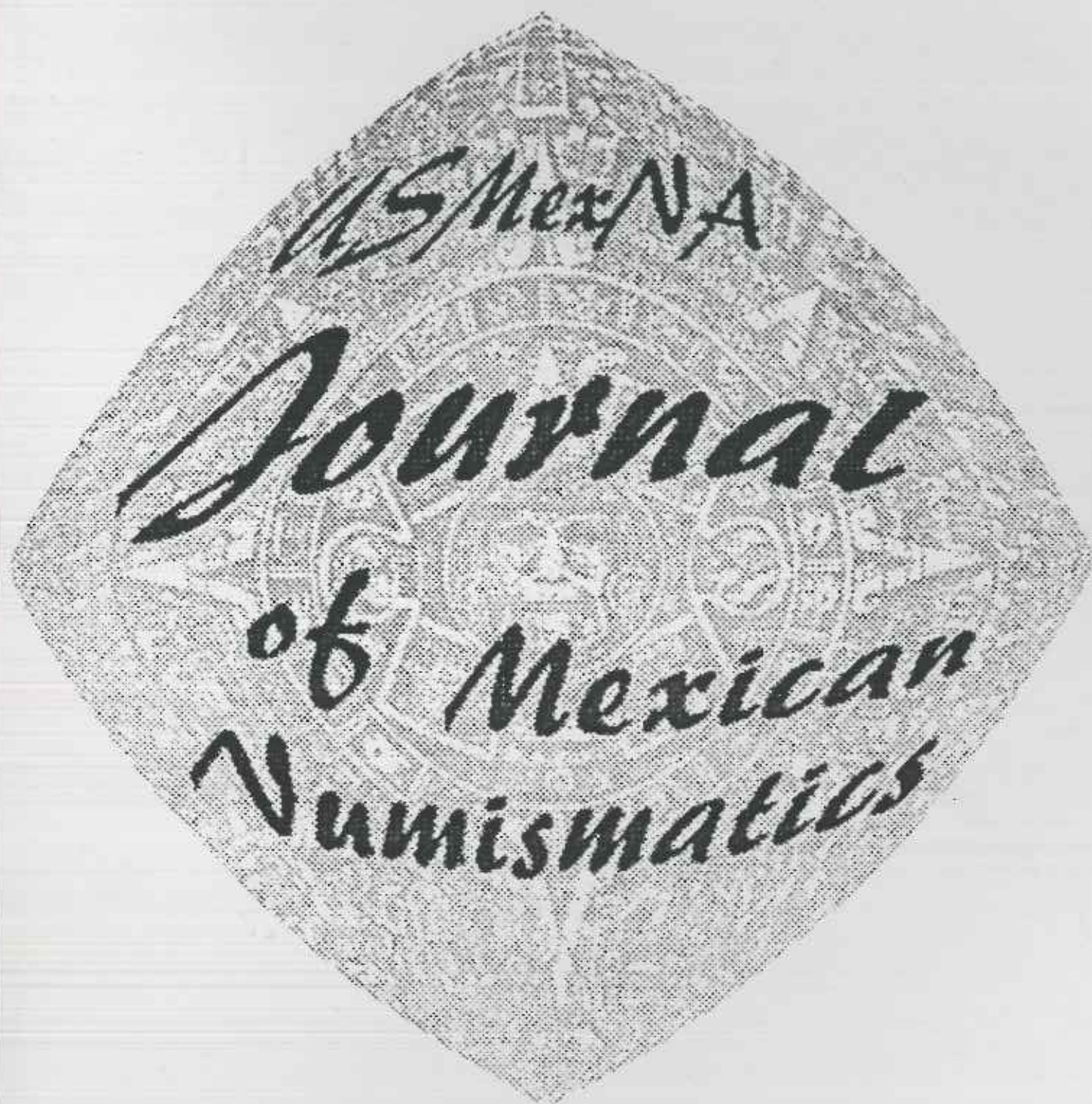


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NO. III



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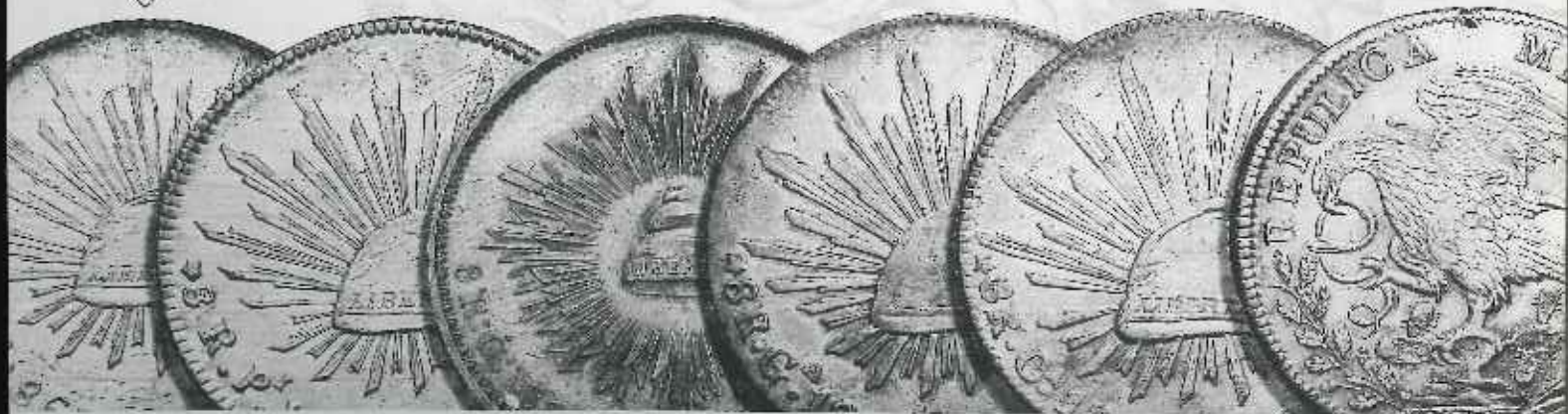
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**SOCIEDAD NUMISMATICA DE MEXICO'S INTERNATIONAL
 NUMISMATIC CONVENTION DATES SET
 AS MARCH 12 THROUGH 17, 2007**

The Sociedad has notified us that they are going to host their next International Numismatic Convention on March 14 through March 17, 2007.

Further details will be reported as we receive them.

VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN

By

Joe Flores C2

CHIHUAHUA PESO DEL NORTE

Un Peso from the State of Chihuahua is better known as Peso Del Norte, and is a common coin. It can be found in all grades, but very difficult to find in BU, with both engravers, Sevilla on the obverse and Salazar on the reverse. The eagle on this coin is one of my favorites because there is so much detail on the feathers of the eagle's wings. They are struck on silver and copper planchets. The copper coins are extremely rare. Photo #1 is of a silver specimen, also known as; IIS-55, U-CHI 12; G-CHIH 30 and GB 72, and GB 72 for copper specimens.

I ACQUIRED A UNIFACE Peso del Norte struck on a BRASS (Laton) planchet. This trial strike coin is the first I had even seen. Other than the Sevilla-Sevilla struck both obverse and reverse sides and in almost all metals, but that is another story for another Journal. Photo #2 is of the brass trial or pattern struck coin.

Joe Flores
P. O. Box 4484
Stockton, CA 95204
E-mail pepcf@msm.com

**PHOTO #1**



PHOTO #2

Photo #2

Edge -----Plain

Metal -----BRASS (Laton)

Diameter---38mm

Thickness--2mm

Weight ----16.10 Grms.

CORRECTION TO THE JUNE 2006 VIVA LA REVOLUCIÓN COLUMN

On page 3 of the June 2006 Journal Vol. XI, No. II the "Reverse" and "Obverse" captions on photo #2 got reversed in error. Of course the eagle side is the obverse.

ARTICLES WANTED

We are looking for articles from our members on any subject of numismatics or of a Mexican historical nature that the member would like to contribute. These can be short or long. Images are very helpful. If there are any questions please let us know.

As you can see most of the articles are from the past. As I like to call them "Oldies but Goodies". In this issue all are at least forty years old, but they contain information that very few association members have seen, and most of us old guys have not read since they were originally published.

Thanks

Your Editor

MAXIMILIAN AND THE LETTER M

By the late Dr. Alberto F. Pradcau

It appears that the Letter "M" was closely associated with his life and in most instances proved to be a bad omen:

His name and that of his maternal grandfather started with said letter: Maximilian
Author of rules of conduct or Maxims

He was a sea faring individual, head of the Austrian Navy, a department which in other languages is interpreted as Marine or Mariner.

Named Governor General of the Lombard-Venetian province he had his official residence in the palace of Monze, in Milan.

He met Napoleon III the month of May, 1856. The Empress Eugenie de Montijo and the Duke of Morny, Secretary of State forced the issue. Prince Richard Metternich also approved the plan.

He was married to Carlota by the Archbishop of Malinas, on his way to Vienna they stopped at Maguncia.

His castle at Miramar was on the Mediterranean and in one of the rooms he had the desk that had been the property of Maria Antoinette, Queen of France, decapitated during the French Revolution; it had been presented to him by Napoleon III.

He came to Mexico to occupy Moctezuma's throne, arrived the month of May, while in Morelos received the news of the death of Carlotta's father (Leopold I, King of Belgium); founded the Maternity houses (one in Puebla and the other in Mexico City).

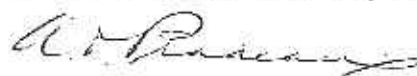
The principal commanders were Mejía, Miramón, Marquez and Méndez and he was executed with Mejía and Miramón.

His surrender in Querétaro was on May 15, 1867; his remains were claimed by Baron Magnus. The fall of his empire was due mostly to the Monroe Doctrine

His Memoirs, started when he was 19 years old reveal that he had been greatly attracted in Brazil by forests called Matte. These Memoirs were translated in Mexico by two individuals, one of whom was Luis Méndez, and it carried the introduction of Manuel M. de Montellano.

Coincidence? Maybe, but interesting.

Los Angeles, California, June 13, 1970.



THE AZTEC INFLUENCE ON MEXICAN NUMISMATICS

By the late Armando Ojeda

"Malinche, I have done my duty towards my city and subjects and can do no more; and since I come forcibly and as a prisoner before your person and power, take the dagger which you carry in your belt and kill me with it now!

With these words, spoken firmly and courageously by the last ruler of the ancient City of Tenochtitlan, in the presence of the conqueror, Hernán Cortes, the Aztec civilization, and the Aztec culture and the Aztec nation came abruptly to their end. 445 years have passed since that fateful thirteenth of August, 1521. Four and a half centuries of struggles, blood and tears, and ceaseless efforts made by the descendants of those men who felt that patriotism was not an empty word; who knew that the country and the native land are not just an idea in the minds of those who rule, but a great complex of family, religion, language, customs and the cohesive force, that keeps these and many other factors together in a great unity which is called nationality.

The Spanish conquest was a hurricane, which tossed the Aztec Empire and the Aztec people. (1.) "The history of the European domination is tragic, because it is a shameful record of conquest and spoliation; but it is also inspiring, because out of it emerges the reverence for human personality and for the earth, which has been a sacred trust of the pre-columbian American".

This earth, mother earth, the piece of land that we call a home and a country, was, since the darkness of prehistory, the idea of the Aztecs. When the tribe started the pilgrimage towards Anahuac, the present Valley of Mexico, they had a definite goal: the possession of a land that would be their home and their country. Centuries elapsed before this idea crystallized; meanwhile the goal was wisely maintained by the priests and rulers of the nomads. "Find a place where an eagle is perched on a cactus, on top of a rock, is devouring his prey, there you will have found the proper site where you will flourish and become great, rich, and forever happy." – such was the prophecy.

Legend, myth, tradition and history vary in detail; but the core of the idea, the center around which generations of Aztecs evolved, was the deep and powerful desire of resting in a place, in a land which they could call their own. Besides the desire for the physical possession of land, there was a more important one, perhaps stronger and deeper: to enjoy that possession in complete freedom. This wisdom and knowledge of the tribe's leaders gave their people a material symbol to look for: the eagle, personification of freedom, the rock, symbol of stability of the land; the serpent, example of the fate of all their enemies.

It was not until 1325, when by chance, coincidence or destiny, that this representation of land and liberty came to be a reality. Using the rock as a foundation, they erected a temple, and around the sacred place the city of Tenochtitlan was built. The symbol however, was always kept reverently in the hearts and minds of every Aztec, until one day ----- The eagle, wounded, abandons for a moment the serpent and proudly faces the

Spanish lion; the primitive arms of the defenders of Tenochtitlan sustain a duel to death with destructive gunpowder. The great city is the theater of a battle with the object of mutual extermination; the results were exactly the opposite. Both races merge to form a third, to create a new and different one; the present Mexican, especially proud of his Aztec blood.

Although the war between the Aztecs and the Spaniards was apparently over, the conflict was alive in the minds of those to whom the exploitation, slavery and serfdom was an unbearable burden. Suddenly a cry is heard in the center of New Spain. The fire of insurrection sweeps the land of Anahuac. For the first time in the history of the Spanish Colony, the Aztec blood boils in contact with this fierce fire. 300 years of repressed desire of freedom found leaders like Hidalgo and Morelos, who started by declaring equality for all of the inhabitants of the territory and the abolishment of slavery. Due to the short lived leadership of Hidalgo, Morelos took upon his shoulders the burden of the campaign, and it was at this time that we see for the first time, the Aztec influence in the money cast and struck by the insurgents: the bow and arrow, long forgotten, came to live in a more powerful way then before; in finances.

Later, from 1830 to 1856, Chihuahua struck coppers of small denominations with the likeness of a native holding a bow and arrow. Jalisco had not only these but a quiver and sling on its coppers; a complete set of arms appears on the nickel pieces of the Republic of 1822-83. Even in gold, the Aztec arms are depicted in the coinage of the first Empire.

Going back to the last years of the war of independence, we find the Supreme Junta Nacional (National Supreme Council) as a political entity, striking and casting in the state of Michoacan, a new and different type of coin; for the first time the Aztec Eagle appeared on Mexican coins. These issues were few and of short duration for several reasons, mainly because of a difference of opinion between Morelos and Rayón at that time, and because the congress was not financially able to produce large quantities. In a letter dated in 1812, Morelos states: "I am sending you three pesos of the provisional coinage of the South which is less ornate then yours. The type is the same I have used up to now and I do not want to be overrun with other designs."

On the coins issued by the S.N.J. the eagle appears as well as a set of arms. In other series, such as the America Morelos and the American Congress, the arms also appear in copper, silver and gold.

Once the independence was consummated a new type of coinage was issued by the empire. In these coins the eagle was deprived of the serpent and crowned. Iturbide was the first to use the word "Mexicano", derived from Mexico, in the legend on his coinage. His abdication in 1823 left in power what was called the Sovereign Mexican Congress. This body, by decree of April 14, 1823, created the coat of arms of the Republic, described in this document as follows: "... that the coat of arms will be the Mexican Eagle, standing on his left foot, on top of a cactus resting on a rock emerging from the waters of the lake and holding in the right foot a snake being torn with its beak; and as an

ornament, two branches, one of laurel and the other of oak, according to the design that was used by the first defenders of independence."

Officially the Aztec Eagle came to be the obverse of the majority of coins, following a decree of August 1st., 1823, which reads: "The coins of gold, silver, and copper will have a common obverse, striking on them the Coat of Arms of the Mexican Nation, with the inscription - REPUBLICA MEXICANA". The old and sacred eagle, symbol of country and nationality has remained in its place of honor through the first Republic, the second Empire, the second republican system and to the present day. This, in spite of years of strife both internal and against foreign powers. Other hazards being the plurality of ideologies, differences in the social levels of leaders and fluctuations in the economy of the country. Through all of this, the eagle has appeared on practically every coin as well as in the magnificent examples of metallic art made in the territory of Independent Mexico.

Some specific mention must be made about one leader of the revolutionary period who had Aztec blood and the same deep feelings and ideas of his ancestors; ZAPATA, who fought for the return of the soil to his fellowmen. His motto being TIERRA Y LIBERTAD (Land and liberty), the centuries old desire of his race.

One more Eagle should be mentioned: the greatest of them all. Since his birth, as if prophetically, he was named FALLING EAGLE. At the beginning of this article you read his last words as a free man. History tells us briefly of his appearance before the eyes of the world at the time when his uncle Moctezuma, prisoner of Cortes, tried in vain to convince his people to stop attacking the Spaniards: a voice was heard among the mob calling Moctezuma a coward; one arm threw the weapon, a stone, which mortally wounded him. The defense of Tenochtitlan during the siege of 93 days against an enemy numerically out of proportion compared to his army, was certainly beyond human possibilities. Repeated instances of peace offerings were proposed and rejected until he was apprehended. The unlimited ambition and greed of the conquerors made him suffer torture, and in 1525, accused of starting a new insurrection, he was executed. For his deeds, his conduct before the enemy, and for his personal courage, Cuauhtemoc has since been considered an outstanding example of patriotism, and recognized as the highest example of the race. His effigy appears in modern coinage of Mexico. Worthy of special mention is the 50 centavo piece, which shows not only the bust, but the hieroglyph of a descending eagle.

In mentioning hieroglyphs, this type of pictograph writing was used by the Aztecs to keep their historical, religious and administrative records. It has been used in Mexican numismatics in a number of commemorative medals. In a similar way one of the masterpieces of the XV century which fortunately was not destroyed was the great stone Aztec calendar. This monument is not only artistic but it is also an example of the degree of progress reached by the Aztec Nation in scientific fields. Placed in the main plaza in front of the great pyramid, it served not only as a calendar but also as a marker of the parallel and meridian of Mexico and as a public sun dial. The design has been

reproduced in various forms on a number of coins. Of special mention one specific coin is known as the "Azteca" – the 20 peso gold bearing the design.

Mountains of literature has been written in regards to the treasure of Moctezuma because it was formed mainly by a large amount of gold made into countless numbers of jewelry pieces which finally were either lost by those who stole them, or scattered throughout the world. Nothing can be accounted for. I would like to give you a piece of this treasure as a souvenir from the Aztecs. Unfortunately it is not possible, but instead I have something which is of a greater and more durable value: I am giving you the soul of Mexico.

Armando Ojeda deceased

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This paper was presented by Mr. Ojeda at the June 1966 Azteca Numismatic Association's C.O.I.N. meeting.

A personal footnote from your Editor:

I knew Armando quite well and was always impressed with his numismatic and historical knowledge. While getting this put into the Journal my thoughts went back to Armando, and especially one visit I had to his home. I was in the LA area for an Azteca meeting at C.O.I.N., and he asked that I spend the night with his family. This was during one of the big fires here, and as we drove to his home we had fires in the hills on both sides of the canyon. As we visited after arriving there the fires got closer, which didn't seem to bother them, but this was in my very early years of being in and out of California. I was assigned the couch in the front room, and Armando's last words were, don't worry about the fire as my son will be on the roof with the garden hose to put out the sparks. Needless to say I did not get much sleep that night.

A GENIUS OF HORSEBACK

From The University Explorer Broadcast #7779- University of Calif. June 2, 1968

What manner of man could slaughter 200 women and children- and yet wax sentimental over a chorus of youngsters singing his favorite song?

This man was called both hell-raiser and hero, the notorious Mexican Revolutionary- Pancho Villa. Even in death the turbulent Mexican rebel, Pancho Villa, was not allowed to rest peacefully. Two and a half years after he was buried in the state of Chihuahua, grave robbers dug up his body and absconded with his head. This ghoulish larceny set off all kinds of rumors. One story had it that American scientists had offered a reward for Villa's skull. They wanted to examine it for clues to the puzzling personality of the brilliant general. For in his lusty lifetime, Villa's character defies analysis, ranging from flashes of genius to momentary madness. And the controversy continues today - was he a protector of the people or a ruthless vandal, loyal patriot or plundering predator?

Unquestionably, he was a liar. And his boastful stories have made it difficult to judge Pancho Villa on the basis of his personal testimony, but in the 45 years that have passed since Villa was murdered on a dusty street in Parral, it has become easier to see the man behind the legend.

One of the most revealing accounts of this redoubtable rebel has been written by William Weber Johnson, professor of journalism in the University of California at Los Angeles. Dr. Johnson has traveled extensively in Mexico as a reporter-and as a researcher for his most recent book, which is entitled *Heroic Mexico*. Johnson's new work tells the story of Mexico's agonizing struggle to shake off the dictators who dominated that country well into the Twentieth Century. It is an engrossing tale of martyrs and thieves, treachery and glory.

Pancho Villa emerges as one of the most provocative figures in the book. (The University "explorer" visited Dr. Johnson and quotes him). "Villa was an extraordinarily fascinating historical figure; the stereotype of the drunken, dim-witted bandito depicted in novels and melodrama does not fit him at all". He was a paradox from the moment he was christened with the incongruous name of Doroteo the masculine counterpart of Dorothy in the Spanish language. His real name was Doroteo Arango."

As a poor child of Mexico's northwest frontier, he looked upon the marauding bandits as heroes- for they stole only from the rich and detested landowners. He claimed that he became an outlaw himself after avenging the rape of his sister with a pistol shot. While hiding out in the hills with other fugitives, he adopted a name which had been used by several previous bandits of the region- Francisco Villa. "Pancho" was his nickname.

In spite of the borrowed name, Pancho Villa himself was unique. The popular image of Villa is that of a hard drinking, hard-hearted, unregenerate bad-man who would stop at nothing. As a matter of fact, he had a number of scruples that influenced his behavior. He was an outlaw, to be

sure. Capable of extreme cruelty, but he often acted with remarkable restraint, compassion and abstinence. For example, he was a teetotaler. He had the greatest contempt for heavy drinkers, and sometimes forbade his soldiers to drink before battle. Only on rare occasions did he smoke, and then it was generally a puff from the cigarette of one of his men- simply a gesture of rapport. As a soldier of fortune, he sometimes used profanity to drive home a point in terms his listeners could understand. But Dr. Johnson says that Villa was surprisingly clean mouthed compared to his companions.

On the other side of the coin, there were two overwhelming excesses that dominated his character: his temper and his women; his bursts of fury have been likened to tropical hurricanes, and his eye for the *Senoritas* never dimmed.

Villa was aware of his indulgences and shortcomings, and he made many attempts at self-improvement as he became an important public figure in the Mexican Revolution. His violent temper often caused him to do savage acts which he quickly regretted so when his personal physician told him that eating meat was the cause of his outbursts, he cut down on its consumption- a Spartan sacrifice for a veteran cattle thief. Toward the end of his career, he had obviously acquired a great deal more self-control. It was apparent in the restraint he showed when goaded by both politicians and petty troublemakers.

In 1912, Villa was imprisoned- ostensibly because his men seized a prize horse as part of their spoils after winning a battle at Parral. He spent many hours in his cell struggling to learn to write, and he eventually bought a typewriter in the hope that it would provide an easier road to literacy. But it proved a tougher battle than his military encounters. Illiterate, he remained, yet in many respects he was brilliant. Military tacticians vouch for his genius on the battlefield.

He was an inspired commander, and his judgments of other men were instinctively perceptive. His admiration of the sincere, dedicated leaders of the Mexican Revolution was unbounded, but he had only scorn for those whom he sized up as fops and phonies. Villa also had an incredible memory, which accounts for a good part of his success as a general. All the complicated logistics of conducting a military campaign he kept in his head, right down to the last round of ammunition.

Villa had great respect for the educated man, and after he captured Chihuahua City in 1913, he started building schools. Even though it was President Madero's order that threw Villa into prison, Villa's loyalty to Madero never wavered following the unfortunate involvement in a plot by General Orozco to assassinate Madero in Juarez. Fortunately, Madero's life was spared and Villa came to regard him as a distinguished patriot. When the docile little man was finally killed in 1913, Villa considered his death a personal loss. This compassionate streak was evident in his character as even in battles, tears for his fallen comrades were often seen streaming down his face

It is hard to reconcile these flashes of generosity, sympathy and genuine love with the grizzly crimes, which General Villa committed in the name of freedom. There are many

versions of Villa's atrocities, depending on who told them. It is well known that he used sadistic henchmen to bludgeon, decapitate, torture, dismember and mutilate his foes. This is the same man who retired to the sleepy Hacienda de Canutillo and kept white doves as pets. This is the same man who included a chapel in his country home and made arrangements for his soldiers to marry the camp followers with whom they had been living. This is the same man who said: "I fought... so that poor men could live like human beings, have their land, send their children to school and have human freedom."

Today you will find the name Francisco Villa inscribed in golden letters on the wall of the Chamber of Deputies in Mexico City, a place reserved for heroes. wherever Villa's head may be, his countrymen have come to the conclusion that his heart was in the right place.

(Produced for the University of Calif. by Charles Levy and William Howe) HEROIC MEXICO- published by Doubleday & Co., Inc.

Appeared in Volume VI, Number 66 of The Azteca Numismatic Association's "Plus Ultra"



THE UNITED STATES NOTES CALLING FOR PAYMENT IN SPANISH MILLED DOLLARS

By The Late Erma C. Stevens

In May and November of 1775, and in February and May of 1776, the Continental Congress emitted its first four issues of "Continental Currency" calling for payment in SPANISH MILLED DOLLARS. The denominations ranged from \$30.00 down to 1/6 dollar. There were many odd and unfamiliar denominations. By 1778 the denominations went as high as \$80.00, while there are many interesting details to be told about this issue, we are primarily concerned with the fact that they called for payment in Spanish coin.

The expression of "Not Worth a Continental" was no reflection on the Spanish Dollar as it was internationally accepted at that time.

In the use of the term "Spanish Milled Dollar", we assume that the portrait type coins of Carolus III were considered as well as those of the Dos Mundos types.

In about 1783, Jefferson wrote a memorandum to Congress in which he said, (in part); "The Spanish Milled Dollar is a known coin, the most familiar of all in the minds of the people. It is already adopted from the South to the North and has identified our currency and therefore happily offers itself as a unit".

THE PALMAREJO RAILROAD TOKEN

BY Elwin C. Leslie

(With particular thanks to Dr. A.F. Pradeau, Erma C. Stevens, Josefina C. de Lopez, Municipal President of Chinipas, and to the Cleveland Public Library.)



Deep down in the wilderness area of southwest Chihuahua State, Mexico, even the lapse of fifty years has failed to erase traces of a narrow gauge right-of-way winding its way through scrub timber, deep gorges, arroyos and occasional mine tailings. Starting at EL ZAPOTE, a few miles south of the sleepy little river town of CHINIPAS, it winds its way by fill and cut eastward some twelve miles to the long idle gold and silver mine of PALMAREJO. The rails have been removed and much of the serpentine right-of-way has been converted to roadway. A few stray spikes and rotted timbers are all that remain on the site to attest to the existence of this remote little mine railroad. There is, however another memento that takes us back through time to the days when the little 2

ton engine puffed along, its shrill whistle echoing through the hills, and its train of miniature ore cars trailing out behind it. That memento is a brass token nearly the size of a quarter dollar bearing on the obverse the words, OCHÁRAN y Ca, PALMAREJO, and on the reverse MEDIO PASAJE DE FERRO CARRIL. The purpose of this article is to reveal to fellow collectors information regarding this railroad and to draw logical conclusions from evidence available as to the tokens former use.

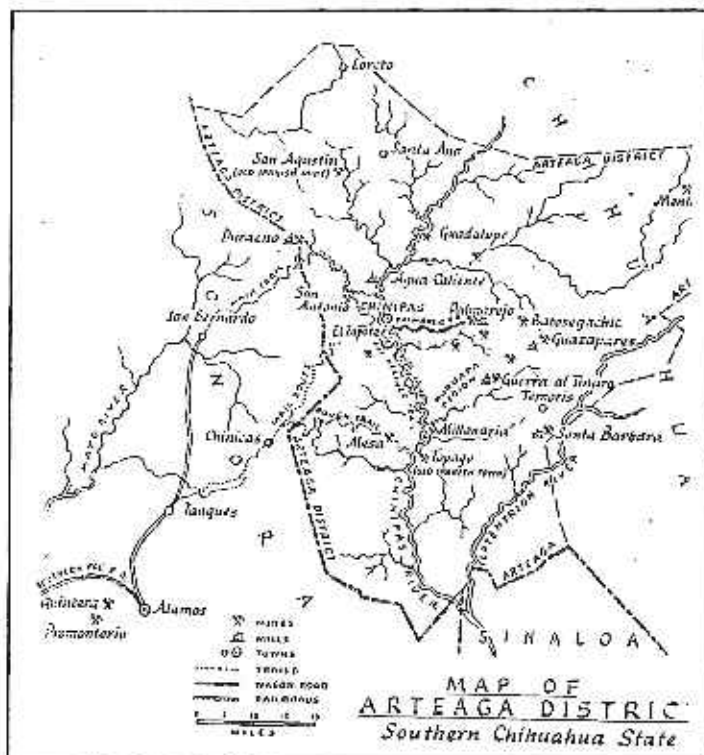
Mineral deposits were discovered at the site of the Palmarejo mine way back in 1818 by Valentine Ruiz, who immediately took on a partner, Tomas Pelayo, and registered the mine as NUESTRA SEÑOR CÁRMEN. Tomas Pelayo passed away in 1823 and that same year Rafael Ayon bought into the firm for \$8000 pesos, but in 1827 sold part of his holdings to Vicente Palacios of Chihuahua and Antonio Lamadrid of Alamos, Sonora. Finding themselves low in funds, the partners obtained a loan in 1837 from Miguel Urrea of Alamos. By 1841 Palacios and Lamadrid had died. Ayón, unable to continue working the mine, sold his interest to Miguel Urrea, who also was successful in purchasing the other partners' interests from heirs to their estates. This turned out to be a rather complicated transaction as the original Pelayo papers and registration had been lost. Fortunately, both the Royal Registrar, José Marii Rodríguez, and the priest, Fr. Gerónimo González, were still living and attested to the facts of the registration and ownership so that Miguel Urrea was at last given clear and complete title to the mines.

By 1853, after an investment of \$1,000,000 pesos, the Palmarejo (by then a walled compound to ward off the Apache raids), the Justina and the San Miguel mines (the latter two miles from Ghinipas near El Zapote) were operating, together with some 35 small crushing mills. After Miguel Urrea's death in 1875 the mines continued to flourish under the ownership of the widow, Justina Almada deUrrea and her brother and brother-in-law. A bonanza existed from 1878-1880. During that time it is claimed that the mines yielded ore to the wealth of one million pesos.

It is quite remarkable that the mine was successful at all, because the ore was of rather low grade and in addition there was a tremendous transportation problem. The western boundary of

Chihuahua State is a wall of precipitous mountains, ranging from 5000 to 7,000 feet, and it is by mule back over rough mountain trails that all freight and supplies for the mine had to be packed. Every bit of material for the construction of the railroad including the engine and cars had to be packed in piece meal by the same difficult method and then reassembled. The takeoff point was the town of Alamos in Sonora State, about 100 miles to the southwest. Alamos was a branch terminal of the Cananea, Rio Yaqui & Pacific Railroad (later the Southern Pacific) so there was a great problem in getting supplies that far.

From there everything had to be carted by wagon northward some 50 miles over what is described as a "fair" road to San Bernardo. At San Bernardo the road ended and the supplies had to be unloaded and transferred to pack burro. The burro trail to the northeast became increasingly difficult as it approached the summit pass (5450 feet) of the range dividing Sonora and Chihuahua States. Even the crossing of the summit, however, did not lessen the difficulty of travel too much because the entire District of Arteaga is a topsy-turvy land, wrinkled with arroyos and canyons and spiked with mountainous projections and peaks. From the summit the trail leads generally southeast following as closely as practicable the contours of a protecting arroyo to Chinipas. From Chinipas the supplies were at first carried by pack mules on to Palmarejo but later the railroad took over this task.



This was not the only route from Alamos to Chinipas. Just north of the town of Tanques a trail branched off from the wagon road and went by way of Chinipas in a northeasterly direction through the high mountains to Chinipas. The trail was a poor one and unsuited for packing in supplies, but being a more direct route was used by mail carriers and light travelers. There was one other alternative trail that branched eastward a few miles north of Chinipas and traversed wild rough country to the Mesa Mine and on to the old Spanish town of Topago. In 1750 Topago was a thriving Spanish mining center having a population of about 15,000. The neighboring mines are said to have produced over \$150,000,000 pesos in mineral wealth. By 1911 the town had deteriorated to ruins and "a few poor huts". Continuing northward along the Chinipas River many fords were

necessary, and it is easy to understand why this route was not popular. Within a stretch of 20 miles the trail crossed the river 30 times! Naturally it could only be used in the dry season.

Miguel Urrea and his widow, Justina, during their operations, had built a reduction plant or mill at El Zapote on the Chinipas River several miles south of the town of Chinipas close to the San Miguel and Justina mines. The plant had readily available water from the Chinipas River. Not so fortunate was the old 60-stamp mill at Palmarejo which had to rely on the uncertain flow of several neighboring streams. A British mining engineer, Edward Applegarth, after examining the mining funds (claims, workings, reserves, reduction plants and all facilities and properties) at El Zapote and Palmarejo, returned to England to report. As a result, the Palmarejo Mining Co., Ltd. Was formed in London and the Urrea properties were purchased by them in 1886 for \$800,000 pesos. Plans were immediately initiated by the new owners for a narrow gauge railroad from Palmarejo to El Zapote for the purpose of transporting ore and supplies.

On June 25, 1898 in London, a new firm, Palmarejo & Mexican Gold Fields Ltd. was incorporated as a reorganization of the Palmarejo Mining Co. Ltd. The reorganization also included the purchase of the property of Goldfields of Mexico Ltd at a cost of \$548,800 pesos. Property consisted of an old mill at Guerra al Tinero and 127 1/2 square miles of land containing mines and timber in the Huruapa Canyon region southwest of Chinipas. The newly organized co. concentrated on building a stone aqueduct 14 miles long from the Chinipas River to Palmarejo and completing the railroad from El Zapote to Palmarejo. A year or two later the Mexican Mineral Railway Co. Ltd. did complete the railroad. A 20-ton locomotive was used to pull the little funnel bottom ore cars back and forth between Palmarejo and the mill at El Zapote. The trains entire capacity was 50 tons of ore, but it could make 2 trips a day. As an indication of size, just one of today's monster ore cars could equal the daily capacity of the entire Palmarejo train. A replacement locomotive that was never put into use today rests in an old shed in El Zapotl. Officials of Chinipas are attempting to obtain permission from the owners to transport it to Chinipas where it would be put on public exhibition as a curio in the City. Park. Rather than assume the unfamiliar task of operating a railroad themselves, the Palmarejo & Mexican Gold Fields Co. leased it to Oscar Ocháran, a resident of Alamos. The little railroad was called Palmarejo R. R., but it was operated, by Ocháran & Co. The Co. had big plans for the mine. They poured over \$5,000,600 pesos into development before the first dividend was issued to stockholders. Chinipas attained a population of 8,000 (today it has barely 1000) and Palmarejo reached its peak at 1000 (today about 300).

El Zapote was a bustling place with the busy reduction plant, train terminal, buildings, administrative headquarters and houses for staff and employees. Today it is in ruins and abandoned except for the watchmen who remain to maintain possession of company equipment.

Unfortunately the improvements and even the little toy railroad soon outlived their usefulness. In 1910 plans were made to tear down the mill at El Zapote and erect a new 300-stamp mill and build an aerial tramway from Palmarejo to the mill to replace the railroad. By the end of 1911 a hydro-electric plant was completed and the new mill and aerial tramway were en route to the mill to be assembled. It was just at this hopeful period of growth and expansion that disaster struck. The Orozquista revolutionary movement erupted and caused all mining operations to be abruptly suspended. All activity ceased and even the material en route from San Bernardo was abandoned on the trail. The little engine had chugged its last and the operator Oscar Ocharan was exiled the following year to the United States. During the period of the revolution, the railroad, the mine and much of the company's property was lost, not because of any military action but because of

abandonment and deterioration. As a result, the company entered a claim with the Anglo-Mexican Special Claims Commission for \$2,600,000 and in August 1931 a decision was made to award the Co. for loss and damages the sum of \$412,000 gold pesos to be paid in eleven annual installments. The Company had continued paying its taxes throughout the troubled times, and finally in 1933 again went into production for a short while. By 1940 some 500,000 tons of ore had been blocked out and there were still plans for building a new mill and tramway. About 10 years ago Mexican mining laws were revised making idle mines susceptible to expropriation. Residents of Palmarejo petitioned the President of Mexico requesting that the mines either be worked or that they be allowed to do so as best they could. The owners announced that the mine would be renovated and reopened and after several years construction was started on an access road between Temoris Station of the Chihuahua to Pacific Railroad and Agua Caliente passing through Palmarejo and Chínipas and using portions of the old Palmarejo Railroad right-of-way as its path. Today there is great activity at both the Palmarejo mine and Agua Caliente where the mines are being prepared and apartments are being constructed for employees.

During the time when the railroad was in operation, little brass tokens were issued, bearing on the reverse side, the words MEDIO PASAJE DE FERRO CARRIL. There are several interpretations of this wording and possible use. One would be---fare for children at half price; this is hardly a reasonable assumption for the reason that this was in fact a mining railroad whose tracks went only from mine to mill. The second possibility would be: half fare for mine employees. This also is an unlikely assumption for a mining railroad whose only possibility for riders would be the mine or railroad employees. Actually it is not even known that the rolling stock included anything other than ore cars. The third possibility is that the MEDIO PASAJE refers not to half-fare, but rather to half passage. A full trip would be to the mine and back. A medio pasaje would be one way between the two terminals. Tokens such as these are usually used for human passengers and yet it is difficult to see the need for such tokens on an isolated mining railroad. There remains the possibility that they may have been used to pay the transport of a load of ore or freight one way between mine and mill. The true answer is probably lost with the years.



The OCHÁRAN Y CA. PALNAREJO token is also found with a steer head counter-stamp, and this takes us back to Oscar Ocháran's home town, Alamos Sonora. Some ten miles west of Alamos lies the Quintera Mine, purchased from José Mariá Almada of Alamos in 1888 by

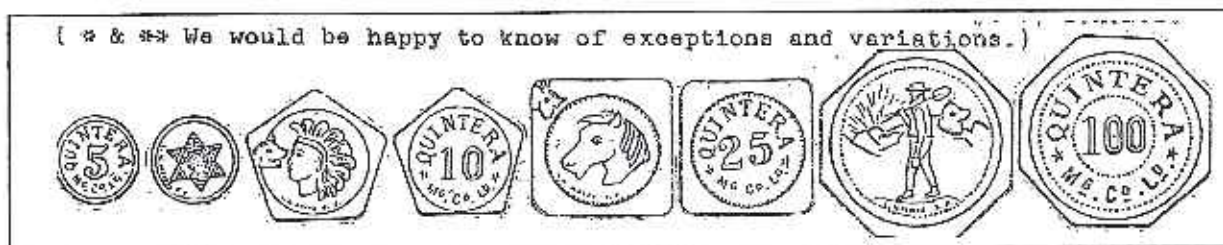
Quintera Mining Co. I.D. a London firm. The Company had brass tokens struck by L. H. Moise, a die sinker of San Francisco, California. Following the custom of many mines and haciendas in Mexico, such tokens were given to employees in payment for services performed and were redeemable for the purchase of food and merchandise at the company store. The Quintera tokens were issued in denominations of 5, 10, 25, 100 (centavos). From the denominational sequence it is very likely that a 50 centavo token also may exist. They were more attractive than most mine tokens because of their diversity of shape and pictorial representation.

The company owned various mining properties, but also owned ranches of about 7,400 acres in the state of Sonora and in the Fuerte District of Sinaloa. These ranches unquestionably had company stores for employees. After the Quintera mine was shut down in 1916 the mining tokens may have

of Quintera tokens that do not have the steer head counter stamp. (Only the 100 and the 5 centavos denominations are known to the author, lacking the counter stamped only one specimen of each of these) In addition to the Quintera tokens a hoard of Palmarejo tokens may have been procured by the Quintera Co. and counter stamped with the steer head impression and put to use on Quintera ranches.

There are several ties that could have brought the Quintera and the Palmarejo tokens together. There was the geographical connection because of Alamos being the supply depot for Palmarejo. Oscar Ocháran, the lessee of the railroad, lived and undoubtedly had many social and business connections in Alamos. Both the Quintera and Palmarejo companies were English controlled and as such there may have been close personal relationships between head personnel. Whatever the catalyst, it served an accomplished fact that the Palmarejo token by means of the steer head counter stamp served a common purpose with the Quintera counter stamped tokens and the probabilities are that this use occurred at the Quintera owned ranches of Sonora and Sinaloa.

Elwin C. Leslie - #C-87 T.A.N.S.



Mexico.
Le Mexique.

FROM VOL.3, NUMBER 26 of "PLUS ULTRA", Mid 1960s

To the Editor of Plus Ultra:

Recently, a disparaging opinion of Mexican hacienda tokens was expressed in a national coin publication

"One mans poison many men's meat "

A DEFENSE OF HACIENDA TOKENS

Elwin C. Leslie

Hacienda tokens are neither "junk," trash," "scorpions in the bathroom", or "cigar wrappers from Pumpkin center". To so label them is to ridicule the numismatic contributions of such men as Manuel Romero de Terreros, Jose Francisco Pedraza, O.P.Eklund and Sidney P. Noe, to say nothing of Dr. A.F. Pradeau. They all, as have many other learned numismatists, devoted much time and research to the study of Mexican tokens. The worth of their writings cannot be disputed.

The American Numismatic Society thought enough of hacienda tokens to devote one of their celebrated Numismatic Notes and Monographs to the subject. The Sociedad Numismatica de Mexico has from time to time, published articles concerning hacienda and store tokens, as has our own Plus Ultra.

Howland Wood, O.P .Eklund, Fonrobert, von Schrotten, Romero de Terreros, Howard Gibbs and many other well known collectors and numismatists had a great interest in hacienda tokens. One of the finest collections of such tokens is at The American Numismatic Society in New York City, and it is certain that they are not regarded lightly, though many of them may be from small haciendas or stores, and others may be unattributable.

The fact that many of them are from small or insignificant haciendas should not be a reason for labeling them "trash" or "junk". If the same measure were applied to coins, the coins of Hejaz, Comoro Islands, German New Guinea and Eritrea would be "junk". It is highly unlikely that any knowledgeable collector so regards them.

It is true that a large percentage of hacienda tokens exist which cannot be classified. However, this is not a factor that should make them undesirable. It is a challenge of the unknown that frequently leads to discovery and knowledge. To denounce these tokens that cannot be attributed is to shut the door on future knowledge. Actually, even without attribution a hacienda token can be appealing, because there is glamour and adventure in the mystery of the unknown.

It is also true that many hacienda tokens of Mexico are very crude and primitive and certainly cannot in any sense be considered works of art, but in their crudeness lies their charm. Locally cast or struck with the simplest of tools and skills, they evidence an individuality and lack of uniformity probably unequalled in any other series.

As far as rarity is concerned, that quality is definitely present in the Mexican hacienda tokens. Many were struck in small quantities for local use. With the agrarian reforms, political upheavals and fires of revolution in Mexico's turbulent past, it is no wonder that in many instances but few tokens survived.

One of the most difficult thing to judge about a token is its monetary value. Actually, it is worth only what a buyer will pay for it, and that will fluctuate with a series popularity. An increasing number of collectors competing for a limited number of pieces will inevitably result in higher prices, and some dealers will be very quick to take advantage of such a situation. The tokens themselves are not to blame for this and should not be denounced for it.

What is a token worth? It is certain that 20 centavos, 50 centavos or even a peso (2¢ to 8¢ U. S.)

is a ridiculously low price to pay for any Mexican hacienda token today, as it would have been several years or even ten years ago. During the past ten years everything in numismatics, indeed just about everything in our life, has increased in cost, hacienda tokens included. Fortunately, the decision to buy or not rests with the buyer, not the seller. Eventually prices will find their own true level as more is known and written about hacienda tokens and their relative scarcities.

The South African Numismatic Society is at present time publishing a list of all known South African tokens. They range from the very rare Durban Club. Natal token down to the most "insignificant" store card. Yet the Society feels it is of sufficient importance to include every known South African token, even one that might turn out to be from "Pumpkin Center".

To some, the glamour of collecting is a crisp well-preserved piece of paper money, to others, a shiny gleaming proof coin, to others a certain rare date, and to others, a miserably struck patinated hacienda token that takes one back in imagination through the past to a different way of life. Collecting is and should be for one's own personal pleasure, and no matter what the category, whether it be match book covers or cigar wrappers, if it brings pleasure to someone, it is worthwhile.



GOLD COINS OF THE EARLY MEXICAN REPUBLIC

I recently purchased a copy of Richard Long's new book, *Gold Coins of the Early Mexican Republic*. This book is intended to be used as a reference guide to estimate the population and value of a series that includes a number of very rare issues. It was not intended to be entertaining. If you are looking for an entertaining book on Mexican Numismatics, try *Numismatica Mexicana* by Miguel Munoz or *Numismatic History of Mexico* by Alberto Pradeau.

There are very few books such as Richard's, or *Resplandores* by Dunigan and Parker, which give us detailed insight into the approximate population of a series together with an idea of the value of individual coins.

Values in published price guides are based on a general perception of scarcity that has not changed for decades. When it comes to a series such as Mexican Republic gold coins, many items are far rarer and more valuable than most people realize. Only a few dealers have records of estimated population and sales prices, and this information is not generally available. While a book like Richard's is admittedly never complete or totally accurate, it is a far better resource than any other currently available to us.

I recently used Richard's book while pricing a group of Republic gold coins and found it to be extremely useful. It took a great deal of work on his part to convert all the sales data into comprehensible form and I applaud his effort. I encourage anyone seriously interested in Mexican Republic Gold to buy a copy of his book.

Cory Frampton

Mexican Coin Company



GENERAL LUCIO BLANCO COMING TO THE JOURNAL'S NEXT ISSUE

An extensive article on General Lucio Blanco by Carlos M. Larralde, Ph D. An up close and personal account of General Blanco, as Larralde's Grandfather, Ismael Montalvo was associated with General Blanco. With information and illustrations Of these rare Revolutionary notes issued by Blanco.

USMexNA Membership Ad Listings

The Ground Rules: Each active member can place a free ad of up to four lines total of text in the Journal. Suggested topics include Items for sale, Want to Buy, Trade, and Information. Contacts listed in the Journal can be only PO Boxes or Email addresses. In today's modern world, this is only prudent. Correspondents can exchange other information **ON THEIR OWN**. These listings are allotted up to two pages in the Journal. Oldest listings will cycle off first, up to the two- page limit, or as deemed appropriate by the coordinator.

Ads, Listings, and error corrections can be submitted direct to the coordinator, David Hughes, PO Box 596, Davis, CA, 95616, or <david_hughes@dot.ca.gov> for collection, editing and submittal to the Journal.

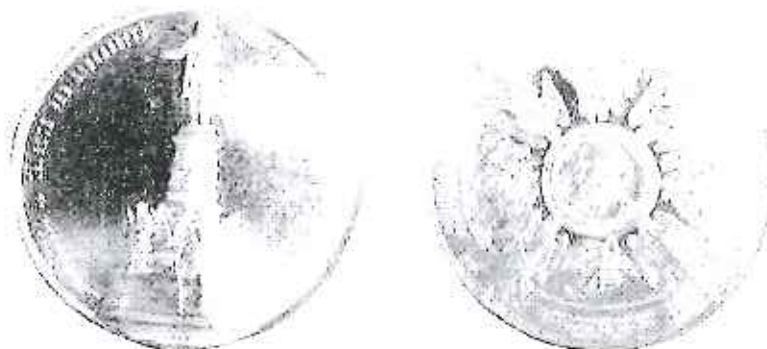
Trade: Collector is interested in 20th century Mexican coins. Have U.S. 20th century coins, lower grades, for trade. Jim Schneiderman jim@evans-mfg.com

[illegible]

Want to Buy: Circulating counterfeit Mexican coinage before 1840. Also, Gem Uncirculated Pillar Dollars of all dates 1732-1773. David Wnuck davc@CoinRaritiesOnline.com

[illegible]

Information: I am collecting information on the Sevilla-Villa medal as described by Joe Flores in the Revolutionary Corner. I am especially interested in any examples that have engraving on the blank (reverse) side, as well as a census of known pieces. This is for a future article in the Journal. David Hughes, PO Box 596, Davis, CA, 95616, or david_hughes@dot.ca.gov



1874 Medal of a Memorial to Emperor Maximilian at Miramar Castle by J. Tautenhayn

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