

Anepigraphic Cuartillo of Santa Fe, (1770)
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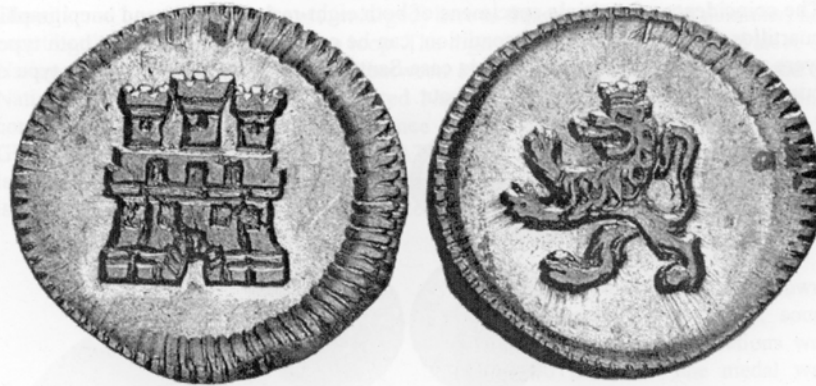


Figure 1
Cuartillo (enlarged)

All cob cuartillos (*cuartillas*, quarter reales), from 1627 to 1756, were produced by the Santa Fe de Bogotá mint (Blanton). The quarter reales struck by Mexico for Carlos and Johanna and those of Potosí and Lima for Philip II or Philip III, were struck before 1627 and exhibit very distinctive characteristics.

Barriga Villalba reported that circular anepigraphic cuartillos were issued by Santa Fe since 1756. The Argentinean, Luciano Pezzano wrote a paper, "*Noticias Sobre un Cuartillo Atribuido a La Rioja*" in regard to an anepigraphic cuartillo offered in a sale catalog as of Fernando VII and struck in La Rioja, Argentina. In another sale he found a similar coin attributed to the Philippines. Finally he quotes another one offered by Sedwick as a coin of Ferdinand VI struck in Santa Fe.

Pezzano wrote an interesting analysis based on the writings of the Colombian, Barriga Villalba and of the Chilean, Carlos Jara. He came to the conclusion that the particular cuartillo was Colombian but he also requested more fundamental data.

To clear confusion in this matter the following finding may shed the necessary light on this subject. In May 2006 a foundation stone was uncovered during excavation for the construction of a modern building in the center of Bogotá. It appears that this foundation stone was from the Nuestra Señora de Pilar church which had previously been demolished and paved over. The large stone broke open and released a few coins. One of the workers surreptitiously removed the contents. Part of the findings were examined by me and consisted fundamentally of Mexican milled coins and Potosí cobs. There were also some Colombian coins: about fourteen eight reales coins dated 1770 (which at that time were not known to exist) in uncirculated condition, about a dozen anepigraphic uncirculated cuartillos of several die varieties and of the same type as those studied by Pezzano, a two reales cob of Philips V, two or three 1760 one real coins in EF condition and one presentation medal of Charles III in

about uncirculated condition. There were also a few gold coins in almost uncirculated condition.

The coincidence of multiple specimens of both eight-reales of 1770 and anepigraphic cuartillos, both in uncirculated condition, can be considered evidence that both types were struck in the same mint, in this case Santa Fe. Prior issues of the same type of cuartillos by Santa Fe cannot be ruled out.



Figure 2
Examples recovered from the foundation stone.
Cuartillo (1770)
Real 1760
Eight Reales 1770

Bibliography:

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