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A Study Of The Mary Lester Field Collection Of Spanish Colonial Silver

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A STUDY OF THE MARY LESTER FIELD COLLECTION
OF SPANISH COLONIAL SILVER

By

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THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
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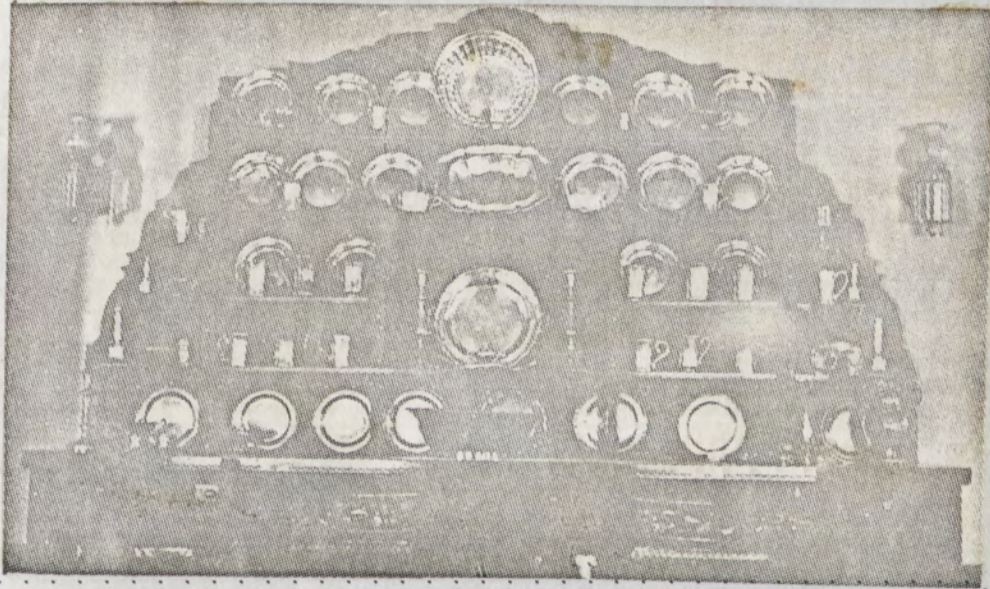
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FRONTISPIECE

The Mary Lester Field Collection
of Spanish Colonial Silver, photo-
graphed as it was displayed on a
large sideboard in the Niel Brooks
Field home, Albuquerque, New Mexico.



THE MARY LESTER FIELD COLLECTION
OF SPANISH COLONIAL SILVER

as it was displayed by
Mrs. Field in her own home

Exhibited in the Zimmerman Library
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico
By the University Art Museum

Figure 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine the body of reference and source material presently available relative to Spanish Colonial silver in New Mexico, and to apply it specifically to the problem of describing, classifying, and dating the pieces in the Mary Lester Field Collection of Spanish Colonial Silver, University Art Museum of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.

A second purpose is to explore the idea that an identifiable provincial style may exist within the general classification of Spanish Colonial silver, especially in relationship to the American Southwest. Critical stylistic analysis will be applied to individual pieces in the collection, within the framework of historical data, to determine whether or not there are enough consistent stylistic differences between those pieces known to have been made in the Mexico City area, and certain examples of unknown origin to justify a distinction between them.

No such stylistic classification can be made on the limited material of one collection. It is hoped, however, that this study may indicate a fruitful area for future research and study with the several collections of Spanish Colonial silver in the United States. The study will be confined to an investigation of the Field Collection, although reference will be made to individual pieces in the

Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, wherever the relationship is clearly defined and significant.

The value of such a study lies chiefly in the acquisition of specific knowledge concerning the art of an important period in American Colonial history. It has value, also, as a reference for future investigators and guide for collectors, especially those in the southwestern part of the United States.

Since little research has been done on silver in this extreme northern part of the Spanish Colonial Empire, much of the material presented here is unfamiliar and requires first-hand observation and hypotheses. It was necessary to start with an examination of the pieces in the collection, then to follow up each avenue of research and comparison as it was revealed during the course of the investigation. Archival and other reference materials in the libraries of the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque and of the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe were searched for mention of table silver in the Province of New Mexico during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Personal interviews with authorities in the field of Spanish Colonial art were most helpful as were those with friends and relatives of Mrs. Field. The latter furnished anecdotes which, while they cannot be considered authoritative, added much to the general interest of the study.

Each piece in the Field Collection was photographed, weighed, measured, and described as fully as possible. This data is tabulated at the end of each description of the individual pieces. Weights are not usually included in the physical descriptions of silver, but since it is one of the chief distinguishing characteristics of Spanish Colonial silver, it is noted in this study. All hall-marks, inscriptions, and other identifying characteristics are enlarged to approximately double their original size and mounted with pictures of the piece or group of pieces on which they were found.

The next problem was to identify and verify the hall-marks and inscriptions in so far as possible. It would have been impossible to do this very important part of the study had it not been for Lawrence Anderson's authoritative work, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vols. I and II. This invaluable reference includes documentary evidence and reliable historical data about hall-marking Spanish Colonial silver in Mexico. Mr. Anderson's scholarly research in the archives of Mexico enabled him to publish a remarkably complete list of licensed silversmiths, assayers, and Veedores (inspectors), and he reproduces their marks along with dates in which they worked. Because of the extent of the material involved he restricted his study to Mexico and adjacent cities.¹ It is possible, therefore,

¹Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico, 1519-1936 Vol. I, p. 4.

that some pieces in the Field Collection which cannot be identified through correlation with Mr. Anderson's material, may yet be verified when the same kind of research is done in the provincial cities of Mexico, especially those in the north.

The material is organized in two general classifications: historic and descriptive; then it is interpreted in relationship to the specific problems of this study. The author's intense interest was aroused not only by the pieces in the collection but also by those early New Mexicans who felt it important to bring these evidences of their traditional standard of living into an oftentimes hostile land. It is hoped that this interest and respect for both the works of art themselves and the culture they represent will be communicated to the reader in the pages which follow.

CHAPTER I

MRS. FIELD AND HER COLLECTION

Mary Lester Field was a southerner. She came from Tennessee to the little Spanish town of Albuquerque in 1866 to visit her brother Felix Hill Lester, a young attorney who had cast his lot with that small band of "Anglos" who comprised a new American community in the broad valley of the Rio Grande in central New Mexico.

Here she fell in love with and married another transplanted southerner, Niel Brooks Field, from Kentucky. He too was a lawyer. As wife and sister of two men destined to become influential leaders in the developing young territory, she soon assumed a prominent position in the social and civic life of frontier society.

Fascinated by the people and customs of this strange land, which had been a northern outpost of Spanish culture in the New World for three hundred years, she soon began collecting art work of the region, especially pieces of massive silver dinner services like those from which she was served by her Spanish speaking friends. Collecting came to be one of the absorbing interests of her life. The last will and testament of her husband, who died in Albuquerque on October 28, 1932, reads in part:

I feel much concern about the future of our collections of Old Spanish and Mexican silver, our collection of Spanish and Mexican shawls, and our collection of santos and bultos and other like articles as well as a 'marriage scarf'

which is framed and hangs on the wall of the living room of our house. My dear wife has devoted a large part of the later years of her life to the assembling of these collections, and it is my belief that these and other articles in our home should become a part of a public museum where they may be available for the enjoyment and education of the people.¹

Stories are still told about the eagerness with which Mrs. Field searched out-of-the-way places for the pieces in the collection at present exhibited in the lobby of the Zimmerman Library at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. One, which is verified by a hand written note on the back of a photograph of the piece, tells of how she found a fine fourteen-inch bowl with twenty eight flutes being used to feed chickens by a family in Peña Blanca, a small village north of Albuquerque. Mrs. Field wrote several such notes on the backs of photographs which she had made of various pieces in the collection. These are quoted in full later in the study under the section devoted to descriptions of individual pieces. Since they are neither signed nor dated, they must be accepted as interesting, rather than authoritative, historical data.

After Mrs. Field's death on February 16, 1939, her silver collection was presented to the University of New Mexico by the trustees of her estate: Barbara J. Dietz,

¹A complete list of the items left to the University as set forth in the text of the Receipt and Agreement signed by the trustees of the Mary Lester Field estate and the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico on May 6, 1939, is reproduced in App. II, p. 187.

J. S. Vaught, and J. O. Marschall; along with a collection of Spanish and Mexican santos and other items of historical interest. Evidently Mrs. Field had given some consideration to the idea of giving her collection to the Society for the Revival of Spanish Arts in New Mexico, a Santa Fe organization which proposed to restore and refurnish the old Palace of the Governors in the early thirties. The restored Palace, one of the finest examples of Colonial architecture in the United States, today houses the Museum of New Mexico and bears witness to the fact that the purpose of the society was eventually accomplished through the cooperation of several organizations and interested individuals.

A letter from Mary Austin, a prominent Santa Fe authoress, addressed to Mrs. Field and dated November 15, 1933, asked for the silver collection in the name of the society.² If one reads between the lines it becomes apparent that there was some disagreement about its disposition which resulted in a refusal by Mrs. Field. A second letter from Miss Austin, dated December 16th. of the same year, evidently referring to an article published locally, says:

The mention of your collection of New Mexican antiques makes me regret more than ever that we could not have secured it for the Spanish Arts Collection. I am sure that we would have been able to give it more dignified publicity.³

²Mary Austin, "Letters of Mary Austin," Special Collections, Zimmerman Library, Univ. of N. Mex., Albuquerque.

³Ibid.

The collection, as inventoried in the Receipt and Agreement signed by the trustees of the Field estate and the officers of the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico on May 6, 1939, consisted of ninety three pieces and the large display sideboard which is illustrated in the frontispiece of this study. All of the pieces are for table service except for one water pitcher (ewer), one large wash bowl, one incense boat, two tabaqueras (tobacco boxes, referred to in the inventory as snuff boxes), seven candle sticks, and one small bowl for which the use is in doubt. The whole collection is exhibited by the University Museum of Art in the Zimmerman Library in a large plate glass case which permits inspection from all sides.

The visual impact of the collection as a whole is one of simplicity and weight. Ornamentation is minimal. Many of the pieces are perfectly plain, depending for their great beauty upon the quality and extraordinary thickness of the silver from which they are formed. Decorations, except in a few instances, are integral with the shape of the object itself: ribbings, moldings and flutings. Superficial display has no part in either the design or craftsmanship of these articles, many of which were made for ordinary household use. Probably because they are so much heavier than similar pieces from other parts of the world, they possess to a remarkable degree two intrinsic characteristics of fine old silver: a shimmering blue-white color and a deep, rich patina. Even pieces which are crudely constructed

have an impressive beauty which results from the purity and free use of the metal itself--a kind of naive dignity, expressive of an immense respect for the material used.

Another quality which adds to the feeling of weight results from the method used in forming the shapes. This is a technique commonly called "hammering," or "raising." Shapes were produced from sheet metal first by hammering with a mallet, then by "planishing," a further tapping with a small flat-faced tool for the purpose of smoothing the indented surface left by the hammer. Though one can almost feel the concentration with which the silversmith worked in an attempt to eradicate his hammer marks, many wavy irregularities, eloquent of his inability to accomplish his purpose, mark the surfaces of many articles in the collection.

The presence of these uneven and, it is to be presumed, unintentional, marks is one of the stylistic elements which distinguish a number of pieces from those which have either been cast or perfectly smoothed by planishing with a rolling technique. Smoothness is a consistent characteristic of work produced by skilled silversmiths in the Mexico City area.⁴ Although a few pieces, some bits of decoration and most of the handles, many of which seem to have been added to old pieces at a later date, are cast, the collection as a whole is notable for the number of articles which were made by the old "raised" method.

⁴Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I., p. 306.

Simplicity is a characteristic common to Spanish Colonial silver in general, although probably not to the degree of many of these pieces. Lawrence Anderson in discussing the work of early Mexican silversmiths, says:

Just as the strife and sophistication of Europe is felt in the ambitious, tormented, showy forms produced by those extravagantly rewarded pets of court favorites, the Continental silversmiths, so is the peace and simplicity of Colonial life faithfully reflected in the craft of Mexico. Even in plate completely covered by decoration, such as was produced in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, we see none of the intense craving for glory, none of the near-madness felt in similar forms of Continental Europe. It seemed impossible for the Mexican silversmiths to violate the canons of good taste. With a complete command of technique, they achieved, even in their most earnest attempts to reproduce current European forms, an almost Franciscan directness and simplicity.⁵

Nowhere is this distinction between Spanish Colonial silver and the European forms from which they derived, more obvious than in the Mary Lester Field Collection. It is possible that a further distinction can be made: between a style which reflects the relatively sophisticated urban centers of Mexico and one which expresses the stern realities of frontier life in the out-lying provinces. Since one of the purposes of this study is to explore such a possibility, those pieces in the collection which seem to fall, stylistically, into the latter category will be referred to, for purposes of the study, as "Spanish-American Provincial."

⁵ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, P. 4.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND IN NEW MEXICO

Although silver dinner services may have been part of the equipment carried for personal use by early sixteenth century Spanish explorers in the Southwest, and were almost certainly among the household goods brought in by the first colonists under Don Juan de Oñate in 1598, the first direct reference we have to them concerned Governor Mendizábal who served in Santa Fe between 1659 and 1661. According to Manuel J. Espinosa, in his Introduction to the First Expedition of De Vargas into New Mexico,

Some of the governors tried to bring with them the trappings of position. Governor Mendizábal and his wife brought a carriage, a fine bed and hangings, gilded writing desks, silver plate, expensive clothes, linens, velvets, silks, cordovan leather...¹

There is no description of the silver used by the Mendizábals, and it is doubtful that any of it remained in New Mexico. All of his property was shipped to Parral in the present state of Chihuahau by Governor Peñalosa when Mendizábal and his wife were returned to Mexico City for trial by the Inquisition in 1663.²

The next document which confirms the presence of table silver in the colony is the will of General Don Diego de Vargas Ponce de Leon Zapata y Lujón, Marqués de la Nava de Bracinas, who led the re-conquest of New Mexico in 1692.

¹T. Manuel Espinosa, First Expedition of De Vargas into New Mexico, 1692, p. 12.

²Cleve Hollenbeck, Land of the Conquistadores, p. 131.

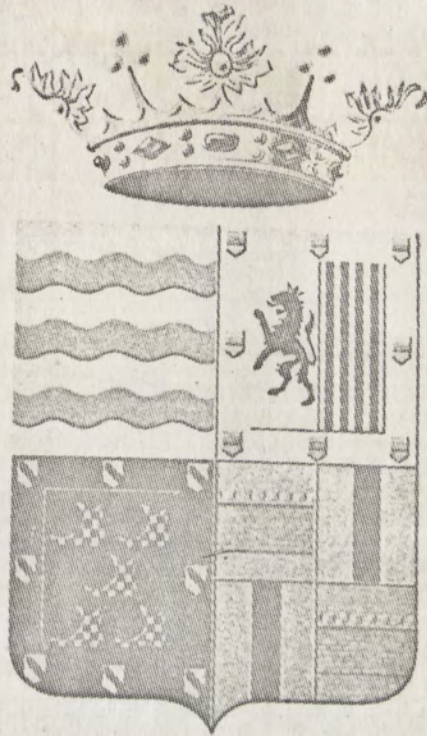
He became ill while fighting the Apaches in the Sandia Mountains near present-day Albuquerque, was carried to near-by Bernalillo where he died on April 8, 1704, after signing his last will and testament and having it duly witnessed by Don Fernando Cháves and his eldest son Bernardo.³

In it he describes sixty seven pieces of table silver, varying in type from forks and spoons to a large cold meat tray, a fuelle (translated "fountain"). According to Miss Eleanor Adams, paleographer at the University of New Mexico and expert in the usage of archaic Spanish, the word is incorrectly translated. The word fuelle was used to indicate a certain kind of cold meat platter which could have been either shallow or deep. Many of these pieces bore the de Vargas coat-of-arms (Figure 2,a). He carefully distinguished several pieces on which the "Royal Fifth" (tax) had been paid, thus indicating that they were stamped with a tax mark of Mexico as described in detail in Chapter III. Presumably, the rest of the pieces were unmarked. The full text of that portion of the will which deals with this silver is reproduced in Appendix II, page 188.⁴

Examination reveals that none of the pieces in the Field Collection exactly match descriptions in the de Vargas

³Fray Angélico Cháves, Origins of New Mexico Families, p. 160

⁴Copies of the de Vargas will and coat-of-arms were mailed to twenty major museums and historical societies in the hopes that some of these pieces might be found in the United States. Stories persist that some remained in New Mexico, but none were located during the course of this investigation.



Blasones del General

*Don Diego de Vargas Lince de Leon Zapata
y Lujan.
Marqués de la Vega de Bracinas.*

COAT OF ARMS OF GENERAL DE VARGAS



b. Bar of Mexican Boullion from Mint

Figure 2.

will. The problem is confused by uncertainty as to the exact meaning of the word "mark" (Spanish marco). According to a Mexican table of equivalents (Appendix II, page 190), it is equal to about 7.8 ounces. However the term "ounce" would have referred to Spanish ounces, not the weight as we use it. It is impossible to compute the exact weights of these pieces without a sixteenth century Spanish table of weights and equivalents. It is impossible, therefore, to make definite comparisons between any of the unmarked pieces in the Field Collection and those described in the de Vargas will. There are none, however, which bear his coat-of-arms, or the single tax mark in use in Mexico during the sixteenth century (Appendix I, Figure 44, 1 and 2).

The people who lived in the Royal City of Santa Fe and in the long valley of the Rio Grande in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were, in many respects, desperately poor. Yet a few of them managed to live with style. They had paintings, crucifixes, small statues of the saints, wall hangings, books, and dishes with which to decorate their homes and set a hospitable table. In the homes of the wealthier families, dinner services were often made of heavy, solid silver. They were treasured, and possibly added to from time to time from precious cargoes of supplies which were painfully brought over the 'Royal Road' from Mexico City to Santa Fe, by way of Chihauhau City, every three years. They were handed down from mother to daughter, and also became part of the dower portion of the sons of a family. A list of the items included in the dowery of a

young man of Santa Fe in 1720 indicates the kind of wealth a young grandee was proud to bring to his bride: "The bridegroom was able to provide 500 ewes, twelve horses, 1 mule, a he mule, 24 canvas paintings, 1 dz. silver spoons, $\frac{1}{2}$ dz. china cups for chocolate...."⁵

Meals were served, to family and guests alike, from a long unfinished table which occupied the place of honor in the kitchen.⁶ Spanish Colonial houses in New Mexico faced inward. Their rooms opened on a central placita (patio); turning blind walls, fashioned from heavy adobe bricks little different from the earth itself, protectively outward towards a broad and dangerous land. The large kitchen often filled an entire side of the shady, tree-studded patio which was planted with flowers and filled with all the evidence of communal family living.

Here, the woman of the house was queen. Here she fed and nurtured her family. Here she served her guests, and here she kept her treasures. Such treasures as are described in a household in Santa Fe of about 1740, by Paul Horgan in his The Centuries of Santa Fe:

In cabinets with carved openwork doors she kept her table silver. Its pieces did not match, but all were heavy and rich to hold. She had silver forks and spoons, a salt cellar, a waiter with cover, and a silver cup "which could hold a quart."⁷

⁵ Paul Horgan, The Centuries of Santa Fe, p. 98

⁶ Ibid, 115.

⁷ Ibid.

When General Stephen Watts Kearney entered Santa Fe on August 18, 1846, as part of the grand strategy of the army of the United States in the War with Mexico, he had on his staff a young lieutenant named W. H. Emory. His was the task of writing a day-by-day account of the campaign for the government in Washington; describing the vast, practically unknown land and its people, which the United States was then taking in a bloodless conquest.

The people of New Mexico were generally hospitable to the Americans, and entertained the officers in their homes. Of one such occasion in Bernalillo, Lieutenant Emory wrote:

We passed on to the house of our host's wealthy son, where we were invited to dine. Here we found another refreshment table; and, after waiting some hours, dinner was announced. It was a queer jumble of refinement and barbarism; the first predominating in everything, except the mode of serving, which was chiefly performed by the master, his Mexican guests, and a few female serfs. The plates, forks, and spoons were of solid New Mexican silver, clumsily worked in the country.

It is interesting to note that the young lieutenant assumed that this silver was made in New Mexico by local craftsmen. The phrase "worked in the country" eloquently states the meaning of the word "provincial" when it is used to describe a work of art. It means work which reveals, by its stylistic elements, that it has been made in an area distant from urban centers of culture.

According to a footnote in William A. Keleher's

⁸
Lt. W. H. Emory, Lieutenant Emory Reports, p. 68

Turmoil in New Mexico, 1846-1868, Mrs. Field believed that she was collecting at least part of this silver, which belonged to the Perea family of Bernalillo:

As the members of the Perea family died, the silverware was divided among many descendents. Mary Lester Field, of Albuquerque, devoted more than forty years to locating and acquiring the scattered Perea silverware. Mrs. Field donated the collection to the University of New Mexico...almost a hundred years after Emory had seen it at Bernalillo.⁹

That it was the Perea family which entertained the Kearney party is documented in an article by W. H. H. Allison in the Old Santa Fe magazine of April 1914. It tells of a number of New Mexican youths, among them Don Juan Perea's sons Francisco and Joaquín, who traveled to St. Louis by caravan across the Santa Fe Trail to attend a Jesuit college in 1843. The brothers returned to New Mexico in the fall of 1845 and again went east in the spring of 1847 to enroll in the select Bank Street Academy in New York City, where professor Hincinle Peuhne, formerly a captain of artillery in Napoleon's army, was headmaster.¹⁰

Francisco, because of his facility in the English language acted as interpreter for the American officers in New Mexico and was present when his father welcomed them in his home:

Young Perea was at his father's house in Bernalillo when General Kearney visited that place a few weeks after the advent of the American army at Santa Fe. At that time the elder Perea gave a banquet to the

⁹William A. Keleher, Turmoil in New Mexico 1846-1868, p. 128.

¹⁰W. H. H. Allison, (Ralph Emerson Twitchell, ed.) "Colonel Francisco Perea," Old Santa Fe, I, no. 4 (April, 1914), 210-21, pp. 212-213.

general and his officers, about fifty in number, the whole party remaining at his house through the entire night.¹¹

Evidently, the dinner described by Lt. Emory took place the following day in the home of one of the sons. No documentary evidence was found which proves that any pieces Mrs. Field collected were actually part of the Perea silver. However, her belief that they were cannot, on the basis of existing evidence, be disproved.

The catalogue description by Elizabeth Moses of pieces from the Field collection which were exhibited at the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum in San Francisco in October 1938, states the belief that some of them were indeed "worked in the country":

The Spanish American silver from the handsome collection of Mrs. Niel B. Field of Albuquerque, New Mexico, offers a most excellent example of a rare phase of American silver-making....Whether the consistent plainness should be attributed to the immaturity of the craftsman--some of the pieces were undoubtedly made by Indians trained by the Spanish colonists--or whether the objects were created in a plain and strong manner because they had to be transported from one location to another, we do not know.¹²

Since one of the stated purposes of this study is to explore the possibility that a "Spanish-American Provincial"

¹¹ W. H. H. Allison, (Ralph Emerson Twitchell, ed.) "Colonel Francisco Perea," Old Santa Fe, I, no. 4 (April 1914), p. 213.

¹² Elizabeth Moses, Exhibition Catalogue, "Three Centuries of European and American Domestic Silver," M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, Oct. 1938, np, (pp. 21-22).

style might be identified, evidence supporting the idea that table silver was manufactured in the province of New Mexico during the colonial period was examined.

Miss Moses' assumption that some of these pieces were made by Indians trained by the Spanish Colonists has validity, but there is no documentary evidence to support it. There can be little doubt, if such were the case, about their ability. Jewelry made today by some of their descendents demonstrates their remarkable aptitude for working in silver and certainly there is no reason to assume that North American Indians of the colonial period would be less capable, particularly if they were given examples to copy, than their southern brothers in Mexico who very early in the days of Spanish rule became so adept that artisans from Spain had to hide their materials and processes to keep them from copying and thus reducing prices. In a report on the activities of an early Franciscan school for Indians in Mexico City, the Industrial Seminary of San José, Fray Jerónimo de Mendieta wrote:

Moreover, they began to develop with that ordinary exercise, and they coveted some advantage from (the knowledge) they were acquiring (in addition they were like monkeys: what they saw some do, the others wanted to do). In this manner they soon learned the trades better than the artisans desired. Because those who came fresh from Spain, and were thinking that as there were no others of their trade they were going to sell and earn as they might wish, soon found that the Indians excelled them on account of their great activity

and talent and the excellent manner of their work...."¹³

Of course it is possible that Indians may have made some table silver. Such a conclusion, however, must remain presumptive. Dr. Harry P. Mera states that the Navajo and Zuni Indians of New Mexico did not learn the art of silversmithing until the end of the 1860's.¹⁴ W. Ben Hunt, in his Indian Silversmithing, agrees with him:

...the art of silversmithing as practiced by the Navajo, Zuni, and other Pueblo Indians is relatively young. Old Spanish writings indicate that as early as 1795 "Navajo captains were rarely seen without their silver ornaments," but it was not until somewhere between 1850 and 1870 that the Navajos acquired the skill from the Mexican plateros (silversmiths). From the Navajos the art spread to the Zunis, and to a lesser degree to other smaller tribes of the Pueblo group.¹⁵

There is, however, documentary evidence that there were professional New Mexican colonial silversmiths working in the province in the early nineteenth century. Three are listed as such in the army enlistment and personnel files recorded in the New Mexico Records and Archives. They were Francisco de la Peña, Santa Fe, 1828; Thomas S. Sandoval, Santa Fe, 1833; and Jose Francisco Lopes, Abiquiu, 1842. (See Reference below.)

Thus the weight of evidence indicates that, if any

¹³ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I., p. 66.

¹⁴ Harry P. Mera, Indian Silverwork in the Southwest, Vol. I, p.1.

¹⁵ W. Ben Hunt, Indian Silversmithing, p. 5

table silver was made in Colonial New Mexico, it was more likely to have been done by colonial artisans than by the Indians.

Although silver was not mined in New Mexico until 1867 when ore was discovered in Socorro, bars of bullion from the mines of northern Mexico found their way into the province. One, which was found in New Mexico, is shown in Figure 2, b. It is from the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Ward Alan Minge of Corrales, New Mexico, in whose files the material documenting the silversmiths listed above was also found. Coins may have been another source of silver for crafting. Such was the case in the Rio Abajo during the late nineteenth century, as recalled by Mrs. Henrika Huning, a pioneer woman whose daughter, Mrs. F. C. W. Pooler, preserved her reminiscences of frontier life. These notes were organized by Miss Laurel E. Drew in a paper written for the University of New Mexico in 1963. One of the anecdotes reads:

...Principal families were the Lunas, Jamarillo, and Romero....The oldest silverware consisted of silver plates, water pitchers, mugs, trays, hammered from silver dollars by a silversmith in Pajarito. (Anastasio Burgos was the silversmith in Pajarito).¹⁶

This story, though it may not be reliable historical material, suggests a Rio Grande provenance of some "Spanish-American Provincial" pieces. The content of pure silver

¹⁶ Laurel E. Drew, "Henrika (Busch) Huning," p. 2.

in both Mexican and American coins was probably different from that required by law (discussed in chapter three) in Mexican silversmithing. This should be capable of proof by testing.

In any case, there seems to be a good probability that at least some of the table silver used by New Mexicans was made in New Mexico. A number of pieces in the Field Collection could have been. They will be singled out, and analyzed stylistically with this possibility in mind, in the section devoted to descriptions of individual pieces.

Evidently, owning a silver dinner service was a status symbol in colonial New Mexico. They are frequently mentioned in the chronicles in reference to "the most important people." One such was Governor Manuel Armijo, who collected his wealth and deserted his capital city of Santa Fe the day before the entrance of the American army on August 18, 1846. By 1850 he was living on one of his properties at Lemitar, where he was so short of ready cash that he "was forced to offer his silver table service to an American lieutenant for three hundred dollars."¹⁷

These rich table appointments attracted the attention of other nineteenth century American travellers. Matt Field, a poet-philosopher-writer who ventured across the

¹⁷ Paul Horgan, The Great River, Vol. II, p. 788.

Santa Fe Trail in 1839 in the company of one of the wagon trains which after the 1820's regularly carried trade goods from Missouri to Santa Fe, kept a record of his experiences and impressions. He later used this material for a series of special interest feature articles published in the New Orleans Picayune. In one, entitled "A Mexican Inn," February 18-22, 1841, he describes a country inn below Taos which was:

...situated in a deep and narrow valley, the mountains soaring in the clouds above it on every side. It stood upon the banks of the Rio Grande, so near the mountain source of that noble river, that we could find no greater depth of water than four inches...The host was a rosy, rotund, hearty old fellow...He was reputed to be rich, and doing business only for occupation and amusement, which was doubtless true, for the inn was furnished with, and in all its appointments, displayed more costly elegance and taste, than any other house we entered in this part of Mexico. We were served upon silver plates and dishes, which were laid upon exquisitely wrought Chihauhau blankets, and we sat upon the most luxurious couches, around a table heaped with novel and tempting viands, which the attentive submission of the Spanish servants left us with scarcely the necessity of uttering a wish.¹⁸

Paul Horgan, in his Centuries of Santa Fe, describes a gift received by a Santa Fe matron in the late nineteenth century which must have aroused the envy of her contemporary and avid collector, Mary Lester Field of Albuquerque:

When the gift came, she was delighted by its beauty and moved by its history. It was a set of twelve silver service plates, heavy and shiny as water,

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John E. Sunder (Ed.), Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail, p. 195.

bearing the crowned monogram of the Emperor Maxmillan of Mexico...these plates had been used at his own dinner table.¹⁹

According to E. Boyd, curator of Spanish Colonial Collections at the Museum of New Mexico, much of the old silver was melted down and made into coins during the poverty-stricken days after the Mexican war of independence. Even the limited support from the crown upon which the northern province had depended was cut off. The new Republic of Mexico was too occupied with the problems of government and the struggle to retain its Texas territories to pay much attention to its other northern outpost of the Rio Grande. The same thing happened again after the Civil War, when the land in the long valley was the victim of constant Apache and Comanche raids and a decade of devastating drought. Consequently, there are few collections of this increasingly rare type of American Colonial art.

No doubt some, perhaps a great deal, of it is still owned and used by descendents of families who lived in the Spanish Colonial areas of New Mexico, Arizona, California, Louisiana, and Florida. It is to be hoped that these pieces will eventually find their way into museum collections, where their beauty and historical significance can be enjoyed and appreciated by the general public.

¹⁹ Paul Horgan, The Centuries of Santa Fe, p. 273.

CHAPTER III
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND IN MEXICO

In order to assign origins and dates to these pieces in the Mary Lester Field Collection which bear official marks, one must look to Colonial practices of hall-marking in Mexico.

Although regulations and controls for the art of silversmithing were imposed in the capital by the crown soon after the Conquest, the record is confused. Earliest hall-marks were stamped on finished pieces only to indicate that the tax, the Royal Fifth, had been paid. Evidently, evasion of taxes through fraudulent marking, or failure to mark, was practiced from the very first. We find veedores (overseers) who, along with their other responsibilities, were supposed to visit the silversmith shops and denounce falsifications and frauds to the authorities mentioned in the official record of the Assembly of Mexico as early as January 14, 1527.¹

A silversmith's guild was established in Mexico City shortly after the Conquest. It was the duty of the guild to appoint veedores annually, such elections to be, at first, subject to confirmation by the Assembly, and later by the Viceroy. It was the responsibility of the veedor

¹ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, pp. 79-80.

to hall-mark all pieces of silver fabricated in the silver-smith shops of the city. The first official die is recorded in the proceedings of the Assembly on January 24, 1533, at the time of the confirmation of one Pedro Despina as veedor:

This day the said members, with the consent and approval of the artisans of silver and gold, said that they named and appointed for "veedor" and "alcalde" of said trade and for marker [hall-marker] of this city Pedro Despina²⁸ assayer, as the person who had more votes from the artisans of said trade, and they received the solemn oath that in such cases is required, and which he gave in due form. Having given the oath they gave him power and authority to administer the offices and charges in keeping with the ordinances of this city. They then delivered to him the die²⁹ [punch] of this city which he received in his keeping and signed. Pedro Despina.²

Pedro de Espina (contractions of surnames is not uncommon in the Spanish language) was the fourth to serve as veedor in Mexico City. Anderson lists three who preceded him: Etor Mendez and Diego Martin in 1527, and Francisco de Toledo in 1532.³ We have the colonist's cleverness in the evasion of taxes to thank for this early hall-marking. In fact, fear for the loss of his Royal Fifth so distressed Charles V that he had earlier attempted to abolish the fabrication of gold and silver in the colonies.

² Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 80.

Footnote 28 refers to the fact that Pedro de Espina had served as hall-marker for gold cast in the mint in 1528. Footnote 29 calls attention to the fact that this is the first time the words "die of the city" is found in the records.

³ Ibid. p. 82 Anderson's list of Veedores from 1527 to 1544 is included in App. II, pp. 188-189.

He had, by a royal decree of November 9, 1526, forbidden the artisans of Mexico to work 'under penalty of death and loss of their properties.' It was modified to permit a limited practice of the art by the Queen in 1533 and was later revoked by Philip II in 1559.⁴ The office of veedor was established hard on the heels of the original decree forbidding silversmiths to work in Mexico.

The first two veedores (evidently they held the office together) were confirmed by the Assembly of Mexico on January 14, 1527.

Only one mark was required by law between 1524 and 1638. It was stamped by the veedor in Mexico City or the assayer in cities where there were cajas reales (royal strong boxes).⁵ It signified that the Royal Fifth had been paid and also served as a hall-mark of quality. The first law passed which referred expressly to marks on silver plate was signed by Philip II on July 8, 1578, and again on October 30, 1584. It specifically refers to: "a [one] small symbol or mark...which is made for this purpose."⁶

The mark used on silver fabricated in Mexico City until 1578 was probably, though not positively, a crude variation of an M with an o, like the one found on one of

⁴ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, pp. 75-76.

⁵ Towns which contained cajas reales listed in App. II, p. 189.

⁶ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 285.

the oldest pieces examined by Mr. Anderson, reproduced in Appendix I, Figure 44, 1.⁷ In order to facilitate comparisons to be discussed in Chapter IV of this study, copies of those pages which contain reproductions of both genuine and forged Mexican marks, with Anderson's designations, from The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, are included in Appendix I of this text. All comparisons aimed at assigning origins or dates to the pieces of the Mary Lester Field Collection will be done in relationship to this material.

In 1638 the Viceroy, the Marquis de Cadereyta, issued a set of ordinances which required stamping with two marks: that of the veedor and a silversmith's mark. Those sections which directly affected the hall-marking of silver plate are:

- Article 8. The law that must be obeyed, in order not to defraud the Royal Fifth, by the silversmiths as well as on the part of the "Veedor" and Royal Officials, is the following:
- a. Before working any silver or gold they shall be obliged to present it before the Royal Officials that they may verify that the bullion is assayed and marked.
 - b. That Royal Officials shall weigh and register the bullion, returning it with a certificate.
 - c. After the pieces are made they shall be taken before the same Royal Official so that it may be verified that their weight is the same as the metal in bars [already registered] and that they are of the same standard.

⁷ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 288.

- d. The "Veedor", in the presence of the Royal Officials, shall mark it with the mark and stamp that he should have for this purpose.

Article 17. a. That the silversmiths must have a known mark and stamp to be placed on all pieces made by them.
b. That this mark shall be registered with the Public Scrivener of the Assembly of the City of Mexico.
c. That without this mark they shall not, under penalty, sell plate.

Article 18. That the "Veedor" [Overseer] shall not receive any piece of gold or silver that does not have the stamp of the artisan who made it.

Article 23. That no silversmith shall work silver of lower standard than eleven "dineros" and four grains.

Article 25. That the wares shall not be sold without being of the proper standard, and being hall-marked.

Article 29. That the "Veedor" take special care not to stamp without first seeing that they are of the required standard, loose pieces such as spouts, assembled and ready to solder, necks of vessels, small bottles, jars and flasks, tubes for candlesticks, ends of salt pans, perfume pots, pepper jars and sugar bowls....

Article 30. That no silversmith shall make any gold jewelry or article of silver outside of Mexico City.⁸

The regulation imposed in Article thirty was adjusted for the artisans of Puebla. One of the most famous families of colonial silversmiths, three generations of De Larios, worked there during the eighteenth century. Plate made in Puebla was hall-marked in Mexico City, and can only be distinguished from it by marks of the silversmiths.⁹ Many

⁸ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, pp. 416-433.

⁹ Ibid., p. 207

provincial artisans continued to work in their own cities despite this regulation, selling pieces which bore no official marks. According to Chief Assayer Joseph Antonio Lince Gonzalez, 1779-1788, enough of these unmarked pieces found their way into Mexico City to disturb the authorities:

...This Kingdom was endowed by the Most High with the richest minerals in the world. It is filled with many cities, villages and opulent places, where there are wealthy natives who regularly acquire silver. Many, it is true, obtain it in the City of Mexico, taxed and with all obligations satisfied, but others go to the silversmiths. These are found everywhere, although not licensed, as licensed artisans are exceedingly rare, except in Puebla, where they are regulated like those in this jurisdiction in the form best suited to that city.

...All the plate made where there are neither strong boxes nor assayers is not usually of legal standard, nor has the 20% tax thereon been paid. It is brought to Mexico because the owners come to reside in this city, or send it here to be renovated.¹⁰

The single hall-mark used in Mexico City between 1579 and 1637 was the "Royal Arms," the columns of Hercules with an M surmounted by a crown between them (Appendix I, Figure 44, 2 and 3). Two marks were required between 1638 and 1732. They were a small reproduction of the 'Royal Arms' and a silversmith's mark. Artisan's marks were usually composed of the artist's full name, his initials, or a contraction of his name.¹¹

¹⁰ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 272.

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 397-413. List of silversmiths and dates on which they were licensed in Mexico City prior to 1895.

A Royal Order of October 1, 1733, increased the number of marks required to three. They were: a stamp of the Royal Treasury, signifying that the tax had been paid, a mark of the Chief Assayer bearing his name, indicating that the piece conformed to the standard of quality (eleven dineros), and the silversmith's mark.

In an Ordinance of Assayers issued in Mexico City on July 7, 1783, a fourth mark was decreed. It was the "mark of the place and Royal Crown," to be stamped by the justice of the district as a certificate of quality.¹² This was an M surmounted by a crown. It was the hall-mark of quality used until 1822, when the crown was replaced by an Q, representing the Independent State of Mexico.

Since there were no date marks on Mexican silver, dating is difficult. It is greatly facilitated by knowing the number of legal marks used during the various time periods. Therefore, in the interest of clarity, a short recapitulation of the foregoing material follows:

1524-1578-----ONE MARK
Probably with an M with
an Q. Stood for hall-mark
of quality and tax mark.

1579-1637-----ONE MARK
Royal Arms. Stood for
same as above.

1638-1732-----TWO MARKS
Small Royal Arms. Stood
for same as above. Also
silversmith's mark.

¹² Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico
1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 300.

1733-1782-----THREE MARKS
Name of Chief Assayer (quality).
Stamp of Royal Treasury (tax).
Silversmith's mark.

1783-1895-----FOUR MARKS
Name of Chief Assayer, Stamp
of the Royal Treasury (tax).
Stamp of justice of district
(quality). Silversmith's mark.

In order to date eighteenth and nineteenth century Mexican silver, one needs to know the names of the Chief Assayers and the dates of their times in office from 1733 to 1895. Because of the importance of this material for researchers and collectors, a complete list, as compiled by Mr. Anderson, is included in Appendix II, pages 189 of this study.

Had Mexican craftsmen and officials been strictly law-abiding individuals, the assigning and dating of Colonial silver would be a relatively simple procedure of correlation of marks with the records. This, however, was not the case. Anderson estimates that at least half of the supposedly old Colonial plate offered for sale in Mexico (as of 1936) either bore false marks or were re-
13
productions.

In spite of a continuing stream of ordinances which placed directives and restrictions on the trade, falsifications of marks (especially the tax mark) and failure to mark, were common throughout the Colonial period. Such

¹³
Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 306.

practices permitted a silversmith to sell his wares for twenty per cent less than that of his competitors who had paid the Royal Fifth. Some silversmiths manufactured convincing forgeries of the tax mark which were sometimes used to convince the unknowledgeable that the tax had been paid. We noted earlier how carefully de Vargas, in his will, specified those pieces upon which "the fifth part" had been taken. This indicates that those pieces bore a tax mark. In this case there would have been only one or two, probably genuine, marks (refer to preceding summary). Forged dies were common enough to make them the subject of a directive in the Ordinance for Assayers of 1783:

The Chief Assayer is the ^t sampler of the hall-marks in accordance with his title...Therefore he has in his possession the dies...and the moulds with which these marks are stamped...and whenever one is needed he issues the superior orders required to call an artisan to stamp them. The artisan's work is paid by the royal official from the sworn statements of the assayer. All of which shall thus be done, eliminating the pernicious abuse introduced some time ago in these parts of having these marks made by an artisan, making dies for the purpose at his will, as is done for the royal lottery, tobacco bureau and other bodies, with grave risk that these seals, the 20 percent tax-mark and Royal marks may thus be forged.¹⁴

Evasion of taxes was not the only reason for failure to hall-mark. As we have noted, those silversmiths working outside the metropolitan area of Mexico City were, in most cases, fabricating and selling illegally. San Luis Potosí had a hall-mark, which also served as a mint mark, from

¹⁴
Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 298.

1827 to 1853 (Appendix I, Figure 60). The combined provinces of Guatamala-Chiapas stamped with a small crown and Santiago flying over peaks. (Appendix I, Figure 61). According to Anderson, plate was also being made in Pachuca, Zacatecas, Guadalajara, and probably in the other provinces as well.¹⁵ It is thus evident that the absence of official marks would be a common characteristic of provincial silver. Also, some patrons objected to the appearance of marks on silver and refused to buy pieces which bore them. They felt that they marred the beauty of the articles; an understandable objection when one considers how often Mexican authorities stamped in the most obvious places, especially on the faces of plates.

Early in the twentieth century antique dealers in Mexico began to realize that the absence of hall-marks on their genuine old pieces hindered their sale to a public just becoming conscious of the value of Spanish Colonial silver. Consequently, they stamped some authentic Colonial pieces with false marks. These are rare in proportion to the number of twentieth century imitations of Colonial designs being stamped with falsified marks, the most common type of forgery today. However, it should be abundantly clear that neither the absence of marks, or forged dies, necessarily indicate that an object is not genuine old silver. It only means that assigning and

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Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 10

dating, if such is possible, must be done on the basis of style, percentage of pure silver, and method of manufacture.

In order to arrive at a base from which he could distinguish between genuine and forged marks, Mr. Anderson first classified all marks found on electro-plated objects as forgeries. He also found a number of dies in the silver shops of Mexico City in the early twentieth century which had been made for use in imitating old marks (Appendix I, Figure 59). Some were being used merely as trade-marks or decorations. He then established a 'standard', based upon marks of undeniable authenticity, and determined the genuiness (or falseness) of the marks used for comparison in this study by a method best described in his own words:

The difference between certain forgeries and the genuine marks is very difficult to detect. Perhaps satisfactory proof could never have been presented had it not been my great good fortune to find one of the old punches at the Mint. This punch had been in use since the Independence, the following Chief Assayers having used it:

Buitrón-----1823-1843

Morales-----1882-1889

Sáyago-----1890-1893

Obregón-----1894-1895

Having at hand one of the genuine marks, the tax mark and the other marks which appear with it necessarily must be genuine also....To facilitate comparison, the genuine marks as well as each mark of the forgeries were enlarged five diameters and then printed on transparent material. These enlarged prints were then compared over opaque glass, with a strong light underneath. It was found that, however excellent the forgery, it could not resist this test.¹⁶

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Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, pp. 307-308.

Mr. Anderson's logical assumption that the presence of one genuine mark on a piece validates the authenticity of the other marks which appear with it, will be the basis for judgements or deductions concerning the genuineness of the marks on pieces in the Mary Lester Field Collection.

Other marks which are found on Mexican Colonial silver plate are: the R crowned (Appendix I, Figure 60), owners' marks (Appendix I, Figure 61), and the burilada (Figure 33 and 34).

The R crowned is a rare mark sometimes found on plate made in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries. It was a die stamped on silver at the smelter as proof that the tax had been paid and was again stamped on pieces of plate made from silver which bore the mark, to prevent the Royal Officers from collecting the tax the second time. It is not a hall-mark of quality, nor is it an official tax-mark--therefore, it has no value in the problem of dating, and little in identification.¹⁷

A mark which is sometimes confused with that of the silversmith is the 'owner's mark'. Many individuals had a die made of their name which was stamped on pieces purchased by them. If they are placed upon a piece which also bears an identifiable silversmith's mark they can be easily recognized; otherwise, the best means of

¹⁷

Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 277.

identifying them is through their location on the piece and their degree of elaboration. All of the official marks, especially those of the nineteenth century, were more or less grouped together. The owner's mark was usually placed some distance away on another part of the piece. Silversmith's marks are generally simple, owner's marks sometimes (though not always) more ornate.¹⁸

The burilada (Figures 33 and 34) is a long zig-zag line made by the burin used by inspectors and assayers in removing a small quantity of the metal to be tested for quality. Officials were under instruction not to mar the article, so it was usually placed on the bottom of the piece. They vary greatly in size, pattern, and depth. Evidently some officials showed more respect for the beauty of an article than others for some buriladas are definitely defacing. The presence of this singularly unaesthetic mark on a fine piece of silver often puzzles those who do not know its meaning. Since the sample for testing was usually taken at the time of hall-marking, the presence of the burilada is good corroborative evidence of the genuineness of the piece. This, however, is not invariably true. Mr. Anderson states that he has seen genuine pieces which are hall-marked but do not have the burilada. Also, modern silversmiths sometimes imitate it in an attempt to foist off a reproduction as genuine.

¹⁸ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 247.

Since many of them do not know the meaning of the mark, their buriladas are mere superficial scratches, not deep, as they were in genuine colonial plate. This mark was used throughout the colonial period.¹⁹

It is impossible to date Mexican silver plate made since June 15, 1895. At that time the law was changed, making the presentation of fabricated pieces for marking voluntary. Objects could be presented at the mint for testing and marking by the assayer if the marker so desired, but he was under no legal obligation to do so. Very few articles have been presented, but those which have (as of 1936) carry three marks: A large L which means Ley (standard), a number denoting the parts of silver per thousand which the piece contains, and the "Eagle," the same tax mark which had been used in Mexico City since the early nineteenth century. (Appendix I, Figures 58, 23). All three marks stand for one thing only: the assayed quality of the silver in the piece. They are neither hall-marks nor tax marks.²⁰

¹⁹ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 273.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 345.

CHAPTER IV
DESCRIPTION AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF
INDIVIDUAL PIECES IN COLLECTION

HELMET-SHAPED EWER

(Figure 3)

This wide-mouthed ewer is typical of those placed with large wash basins in the homes of wealthy families during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is probably the finest piece, technically, in the collection, since it is the most elaborately decorated of the three articles which bear any degree of chasing or etching. It is so perfectly finished that it unmistakably reveals the hand of a master craftsman.

In spite of its ornamentation, it still retains the feeling of harmonious simplicity so characteristic of Spanish Colonial silver in Mexico. This is achieved through a sensitive application of decorative design. An embossed spray of naturalistic flowers described and emphasizes the basic pyriform shape and helmet spout by contrasting sharply with large undecorated areas.

Opposite a composite handle, made up of curvilinear leaf forms, a frame inscribed by a delicately chased twisted ribbon, a motif favored by continental silversmiths in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, separates the main elements of the design. A formalized

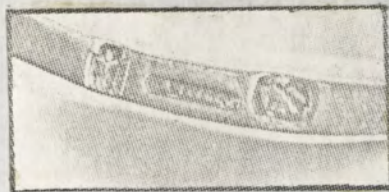
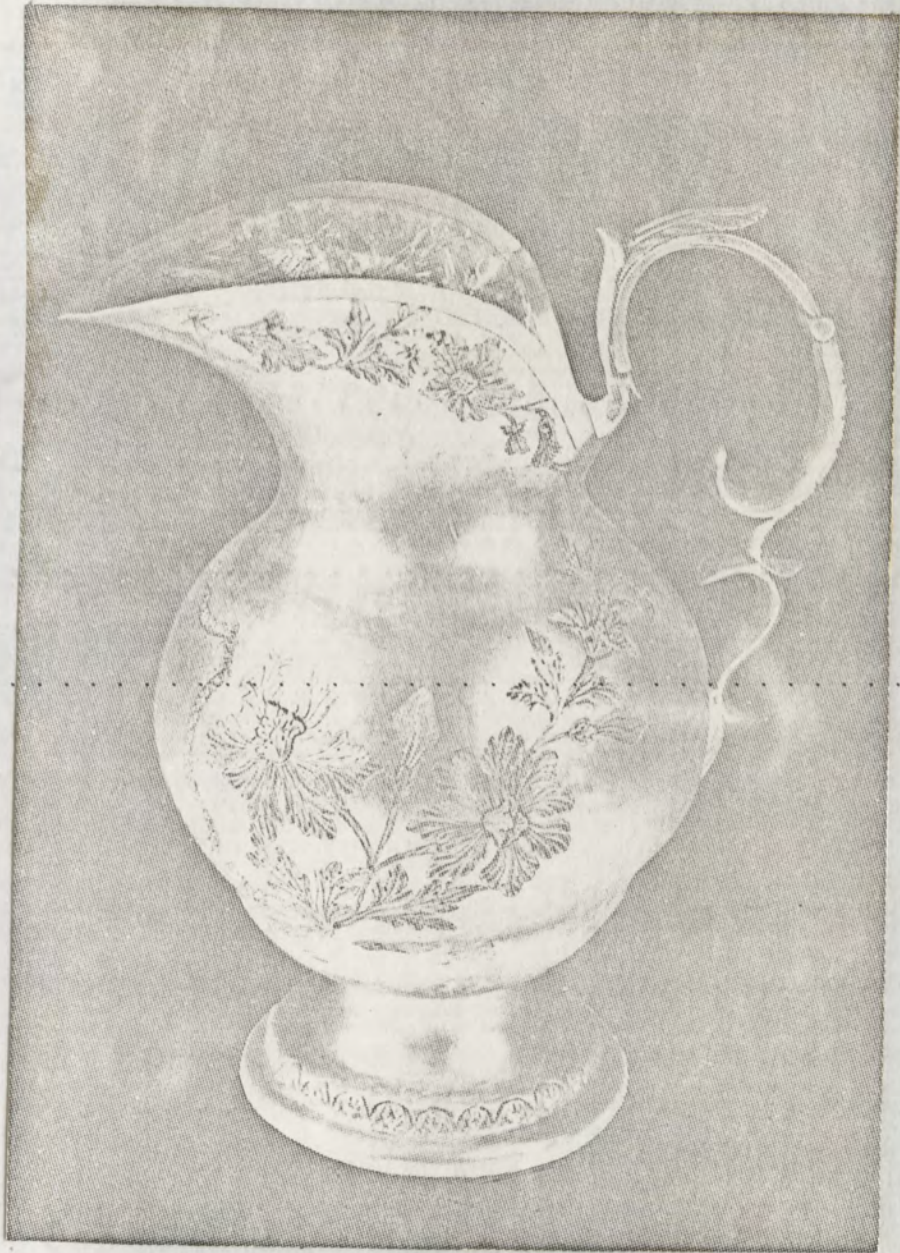


Figure 3, HELMET-SHAPED EWER

leaf pattern borders the base, balancing the wide tailored collar which encircles the spout.

This piece bears the genuine mark of Chief Assayer Antonio del Castillo, who served between January 21, 1861, and March 13, 1862, and again from June, 1867, to February, 1868. (Appendix I, Figure 57, 18). An extraordinarily clear set of marks is on the handle. Another set, identical but worn, is on the base. These are: a flying eagle (tax stamp), an M crowned with an o (hall-mark), and the name of Chief Assayer Castillo. Another stamp, barely visible in the photograph on the edge of the handle at the top, may be a silversmith's mark. The law required that one be placed on pieces made at this time, but this mark is too blurred to make identification possible.

Height----10 5/8" (27.0 cm)
Diameter (widest point)----8 5/8" (21.9 cm)
Diameter (base)----4 3/4" (12.1 cm)
Weight----2 lbs. 14 1/4 oz
Marks----as described.

LARGE FOOTED SALVER

(Figure 4)

Shallow dishes of all types were important items in Spanish Colonial dinner services. They were used for the passing of food at the table and also as "buffet" pieces from which dishes were served. Since it is footed, this six-lobed salver was probably used for the latter purpose.

It was made by the old "raised" method, the hammering and planishing of sheet silver into the desired depth and shape. In spite of the thickness of the silver, its softness necessitated the strengthening of the raised sides by short flutes at the juncture of the lobes. The hollow-molded cyma edge is further supported by short cast feet with shell designs which extend above the edge of the tray. Its slightly marred surface is probably the result of wear rather than unskilled hammering. The general excellence of its craftsmanship indicates that it was made by a master silversmith.

It bears one mark. A flying eagle in a square is stamped on each side of the top. There is no record of this mark in available references. A barely legible name, "Dⁿ.....ia Morales" has been deliberately erased from the bottom edge. Another name, "D.ⁿ Ramon Solis," is crudely hand engraved opposite the erased name.

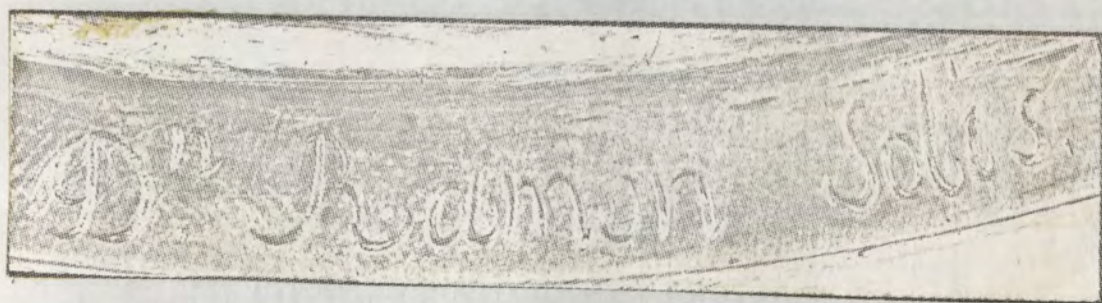
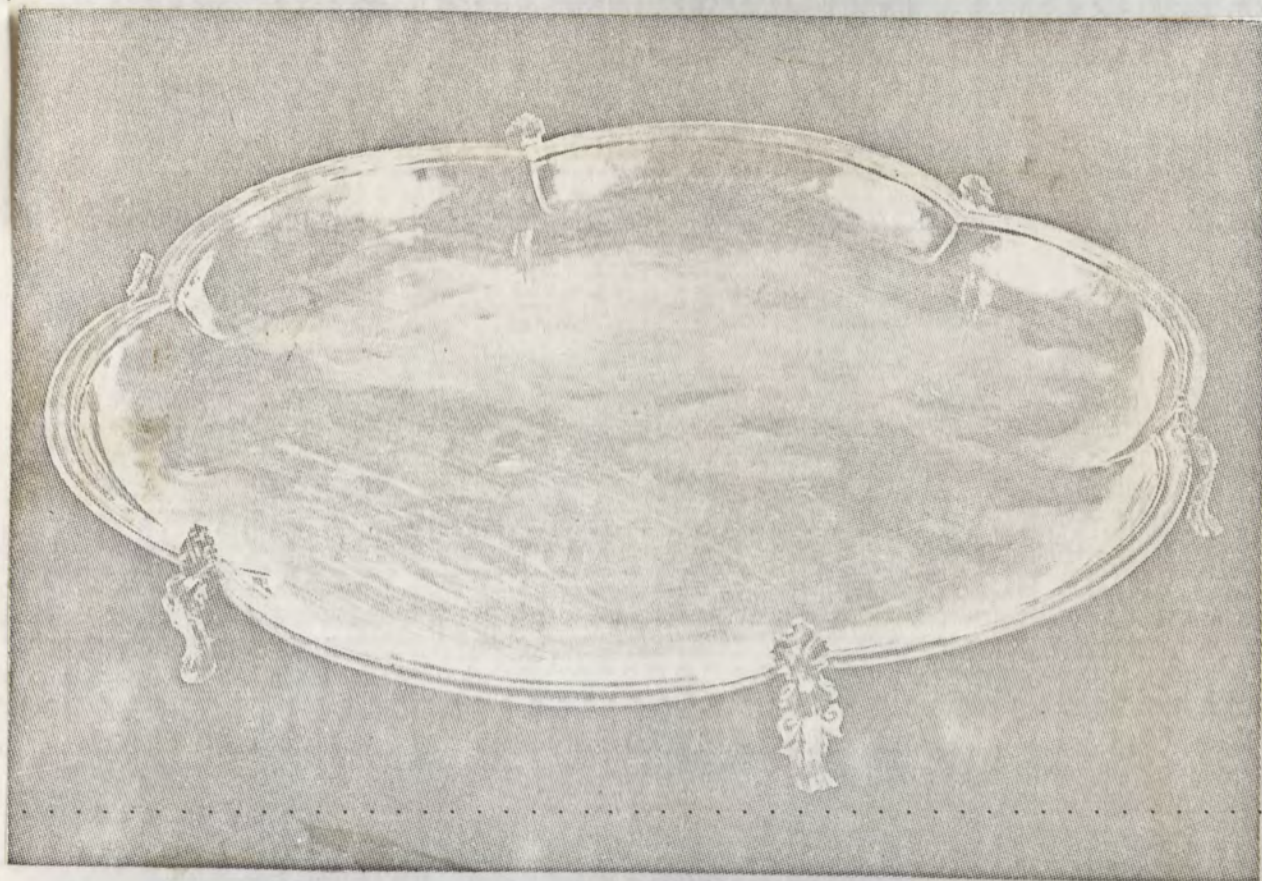


Figure 4. LARGE FOOTED SALVER

A photograph of this piece was among those which Mrs. Field had made. On it she had written, "Tray from Guatemala, purchased 1929." However, this mark is not among those from Guatemala-Chiapas published by Anderson (Appendix I, Figure 61), nor was it found on any of the Guatemalan pieces examined in the Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe. Therefore, it is impossible to assign or date this piece.

Diameter-----13 1/16" (33.3 cm)
Height-----1 1/4" (3.2 cm)
Weight-----2 lbs. 3 oz.
Marks-----As described.

SERVING DISHES

(Figure 5,a)

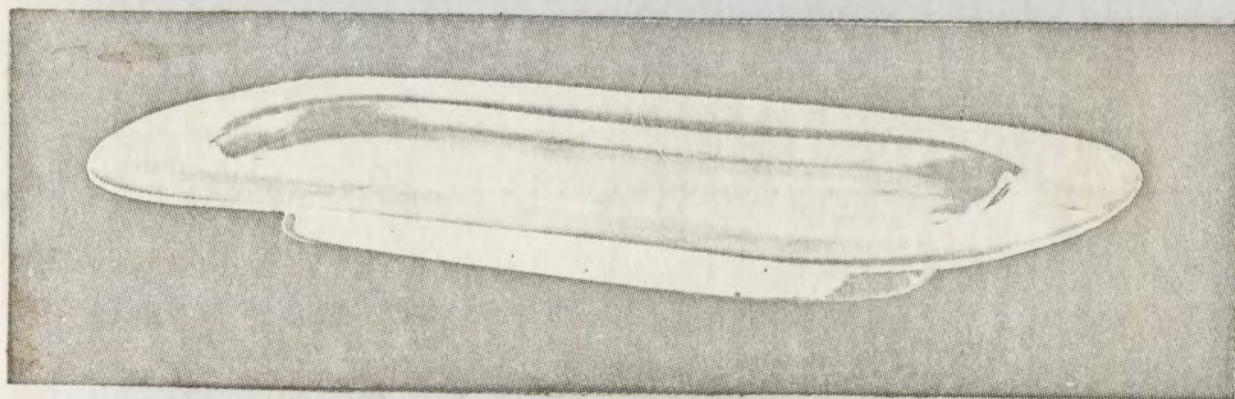
This is the first piece in the collection to be examined stylistically for distinguishing characteristics which might justify its classification as "Spanish-American Provincia." Although it is a lobed design with hollow-molded cyma rim and handles, such as was popular throughout Europe during the eighteenth century, here subtle variations in execution creates a visual impact notably different from that of similar pieces made in Mexico City (Compare to handled tray in Figure 6.).

Most obvious is an over-compensation for the functional purposes of the piece. The bowl is deeper than in most platters, indicating that it was probably meant to be used as an 'all purpose' serving dish; shallow enough for dry foods, yet deep enough for gravies, sauces, or even soups. In fact, Mrs. Field calls it a 'tureen' in her handwritten description. Such versatility of purpose would be important to a frontier family whose collection of cherished silver must be limited.

Hammer marks are quite evident, as is the inexperienced use of the tool in "raising" and defining the periphery of the bowl. When compared to the tray in plate six, one sees that here the sharp execution of the top edge expresses a deliberate utilitarian intent which changes the characteristics of the basic design; creating sharp angles instead



a. Large Platter



b. Small Salver

Figure 5. SERVING DISHES

of softly modulated transitions from one plane to another. The same is true in the degree of concavity of the wide rim, where inaccuracies of tooling in the border speak eloquently of an earnest but unskilled craftsman.

Another provincial characteristic is assymetry. There are slight variations of width, depth, and angles throughout which would have been anathema to a master silversmith with the proper tools in his hands. The technical excellence involved in the making of the hinged handles is not particularly indicative of an urban origin. As will be noted later, in the descriptions of several of the mugs in this collection, manufactured handles were sometimes purchased in Mexico City and later attached to pieces already owned by New Mexican families.

The whole effect is one of unusual weight and organic strength, of the kind evident in early New Mexican mission architecture where subtle modifications of design were created in the process of building. A distinguishable architectural style resulted from an obvious exposure of method of construction and over-compensation of structural elements because of lack of familiarity with tools and design. This, in spite of the fact that the good friar who directed the unskilled labor may have earnestly attempted to reproduce the design of a memoried church in Mexico.

Another provincial element is tactile. An almost sensual surface texture results from inexpert "hammering."

Elisabeth Moses states it well:

The primitive qualities of these objects referring to pieces from the Field Collection is especially delightful. We enjoy the material itself and experience the process of the craftsman hammering and planishing the thick silver sheet...¹

Again a comparison can be made with adobe mission architecture in which one feels this same participation in the act of creation because of subtle modellings and surface irregularities which result from many patient replasterings by hand. Such primitive methods, forced by necessity upon the people of a frontier society, produces an art style which transcends the means; clearly derivative, yet unique, an intensely personal expression of a time, a place, and a way of life.

Mrs. Field states in her note that this piece came from a Mrs. Abeyta who lived in Socorro, New Mexico. According to Fray Angelico Chavez, in his Origins of New Mexico Families, the Abeyta family of the Rio Abajo are descendents of Baltasar Beitia, whose mother is recorded in the parish archives of Santa Fe as having died on July 8, 1772.² Another reference to the Abeitia (Abeyta?) family is found in the acquisition ledger of the Museum of New Mexico as part of the historical background of an incense

¹ Elisabeth Moses, "Three Centuries of American and Domestic Silver," Catalogue, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, Oct. 1938, pp., pp. 21-22.

² Fray Angelico Chavez. Origins of New Mexico Families, p. 119.

boat which came from the Santuario de Esquipulas at Potrero near Chimayo:

The original builder of this chapel was Bernardo Abeitia who made a trip to Mexico to buy things for the new chapel not usually found in New Mexican churches...This incense boat may well have been another of his purchases as the shape conforms to [the] dates of building chapel, 1813-16. First inventory taken [in] 1818, when contents were regarded by Episcopal Visitor from Durango, Mexico, as "very seemly."³

Obviously, if this man was an ancestor of Mrs. Abeyta, he might also have purchased this platter for family use. He could have found it in one of the provinces of northern Mexico but there is no valid reason for excluding the possibility that it could have been made by a Spanish artisan in Santa Fe, probably in the early nineteenth century.

Length----15 5/8" (39.8 cm)
Width-----11" (28.0 cm)
Depth-----3 5/8" (9.2 cm)
Weight----2 lbs. 14 oz.
Marks-----None

SMALL SALVER

(Figure 5,b)

"Long tray from the Church in Old town, from the priest in charge" is the caption written on the back of a photograph of this small, flat tray.

The "Old Town" referred to is undoubtedly that of Albuquerque, New Mexico, which still stands, as a living

³Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 60. 25-24.

memorial to history and a delight to tourists, clustered around its plaza and Franciscan Church on the site where it was established by order of the Spanish Colonial Governor in 1706.

There are no hall-marks or distinguishing characteristics which might make classification of this piece possible.

Its size and simplicity would have made it easy to manufacture any place. The flat base is crudely soldered, but exposed surfaces are smooth indicating that it was made by an artisan with some skill. The probability is that it was made by a local Spanish silversmith in the nineteenth century.

Length----8 1/4" (21.0 cm)
Width-----4" (10.2 cm)
Weight----13 oz.
Marks-----None

ROUND TRAYS

(Figure 6)

These are two identical trays, except for size and weight. Marks in the photograph, arranged in group A are all on the smaller; those in group B on the larger.

They are a popular eighteenth century design which is still being reproduced virtually unchanged. It has six shallow lobes with hollow-molded cyma border and baluster handles fixed in a vertical position. Surfaces are perfectly plain and smoothly planished. All elements are symmetrical.

The chief assayer's mark in group A, on the smaller tray, is very like the genuine stamp of Chief Assayer Diego Gonzales de la Cueva; in office between 1731 and 1778, and again from 1780 to 1782 (Appendix I, Figure 45, 5). The design of the letters seems to differ slightly, but the mark, a small half-moon over "GNZ," is so badly worn that positive identification is difficult. It is, strangely enough, more legible on the face of the tray photographed than in the enlargement of the mark. The tax mark, of which only the top shows, is a "Royal Arms" which is not exactly like any reproduced by Anderson. It resembles one he declares a forgery (Appendix I, Figure 46, 6-E). The same holds true with the hall-mark, an upright eagle. It is similar to a forgery (Appendix I, Figure 47, 6-A), but is



A.



B.



Figure 6. ROUND TRAYS

not exactly like any reproduced.

A small die stamp, either an N or (viewed from the side) a Z with a flattened o on the transverse element, is punched on the rim opposite the three marks described above. It is unidentified. One like it was found on a fork in the collection of the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, which was one of four picked up by the late John Wallace in the 1920's during excavation of a utilities trench directly in front of the Palace of the Governors. Museum authorities describe the fork as "probably Mexican, first half of the nineteenth century".⁴ There is also a rough monogram, XR with a star over the R, hand-scratched on the bottom.

Marks on the larger tray, shown in group B, are almost certainly forgeries. They are the right number and type required by law between 1638 and 1732, a "Royal Arms" and (apparently) an artisan's mark. Here, however, the hall-mark does not conform to the one which, according to Anderson, were legally in use at that time (Appendix I, Figure 44, 3). The letters LXZR seem to be a modern stamp, and there is no silversmith listed whose name might reasonably be contracted in this manner. A monogram, probably the owners, with the letters ^oN is hand applied.

Stylistically it is the twin of the one with marks in group A. Its patina is clear and deep and it is marked

⁴Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 64. 7-1/4.

with a burilada, suggesting that it may be a late eighteenth or early nineteenth century piece on which forged marks were stamped later to make it more salable.

LARGER TRAY

Diameter----14" (35.7 cm)
Depth-----1 3/16" (3.0 cm)
Weight-----2 lbs. 9 oz.
Marks-----As described and
burilada.

SMALLER TRAY

Diameter----13" (33.2 cm)
Depth-----1 3/8" (3.5 cm)
Weight-----2 lbs. 12 oz
Marks-----As described.

SMALL SALVER

(Figure 7)

This piece is firmly dated by an inscription engraved on its face which, translated, reads: "This plate ordered made for the S. C. D. M. C. Lemus the month of May 1837," followed by a die stamp of what was probably a small ecclesiastical insignia. The meaning of the capitalized letters is not known. Miss Eleanor Adams believes that they probably stand for the title of some religious official whose name was "Lemus."

According to a note written by Mrs. Field, this salver came from a Father Docher in Isleta. Since both this and the other small salver described (Figure 5,b) came from priests, it can be assumed that they were used either in the services of the church, or, perhaps as card trays, in the priest's dwelling. Mrs. Field may have used them to serve olives or other small condiments.

It is oval, smoothly planished, and perfectly plain except for an inexpertly molded cyma border. There are no marks which indicate its place of origin.

Length----7 1/2" (19.1 cm)
Width-----5" (12.7 cm)
Weight-----9 oz.
Marks-----None

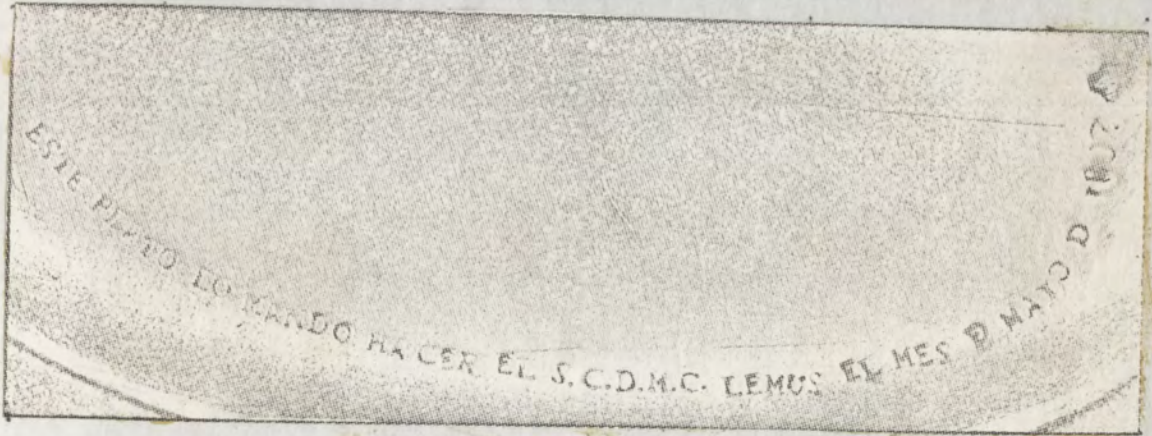
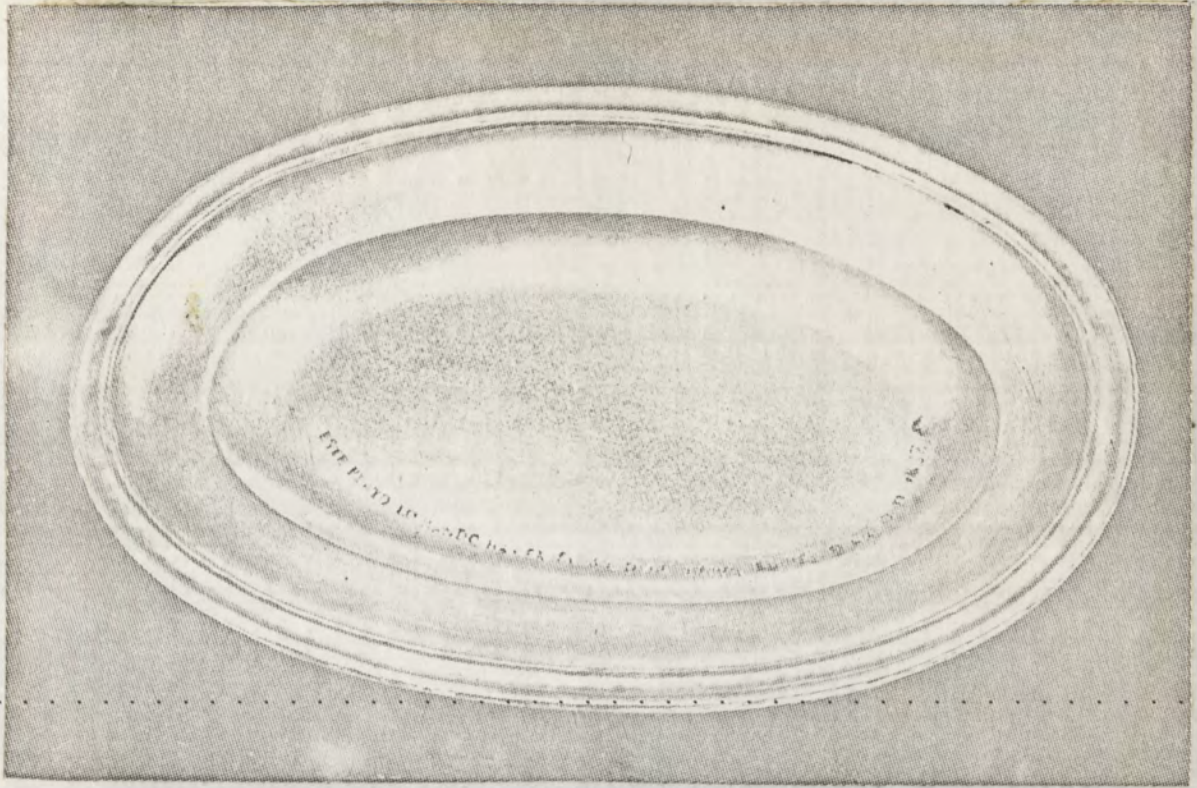


Figure 7. SMALL SALVER

BOWLS

(Figure 8, a)

This large bowl is another piece which will be analyzed stylistically for "Spanish-American Provincial" elements. (Compare to Figure 9).

The stark simplicity of its design permits maximum appreciation of the inherent beauty of old silver. Its clear, blue-white patina constantly modulates, like ruffled water, as light reflects from the countless indentations of the hammer used in "raising" its flaring sides.

It is a perfect example of functional design, organically developed. The "ribs" support the heavy sides, as do the flutes in the large bowl in Figure nine. But here, their purpose is not disguised by incorporation into design. They remain exactly what they are, "ribs," tooled from the inside just close enough together and just deep enough to increase the rigidity of the thick, soft metal. The slightly asymmetrical polygonal shape of the rim resulted naturally from simply thickening and flattening the subtly varied spaces between the ribs.

The result is a forthright statement of intention: to be practical and elegant at the same time, respecting the nature of the material itself enough to depend upon it alone for "elegance." The idea of so primitive a design being executed in almost pure silver tickles the fancy and



a. Large Bowl



b. Small Bowl

Figure 8. BOWLS

delights the imagination. It expresses the same contradictions of Spanish Colonial life revealed by the custom of seating guests in the kitchen around an unfinished cottonwood table set with solid silver, as was proudly done by the senoras in the great haciendas of Colonial New Mexico.⁵

According to Mrs. Field's note, this piece, which she calls a wash bowl, came from Mexico. She purchased it from Mr. Herman Schwizer who was for many years chief buyer for the Fred Harvey Company and an authority on Spanish Colonial Art. She also states that a pitcher which matched it belonged to a Mrs. Max Kirkland of San Francisco, California.

It bears no official marks and could have been made in any provincial area of Mexico at any time during the Colonial period.

Diameter----17 1/8" (43.6 cm)
Depth-----5 5/8" (14.3 cm)
Weight-----5 lbs. 1 oz.
Marks-----None

SMALL BOWL

(Figure 8, b.)

Here again is a piece which could scarcely be the work of a skilled silversmith. Its provincial characteristics

⁵ Paul Horgan, The Great River, Vol. I, p. 358.

are not so clearly defined, but hammer marks and surface irregularities are quite evident, especially on the inside. It probably served as a fruit bowl.

The perfectly plain design is redeemed from pure functionalism by decorated handles which appear to have been cut from a thickened piece of metal and then worked with a knife. Its slightly flared base is heavy and smoother than the body of the bowl. The top rim, which does not maintain perfect symmetry (note variation just under right handle) is slightly thickened and simply cut off.

There are no characteristics which indicate either origin or date.

Diameter (top)----5" (12.7 cm)
Height-----2 1/4" (5.7 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Marks-----None

LARGE FLUTED BOWL

(FIGURE 9)

This piece delighted Mrs. Field when she found it (according to her note) in the chicken yard of a family named Montoya in Pena Blanca, New Mexico.

It is undoubtedly one of the finest pieces in the collection. Thirty perfectly formed flutes terminate in a tailored molded rim, a style popular in Europe by the end of the seventeenth century.⁶ It is in excellent condition, considering the rough usage it must have survived while being used as a watering bowl for chickens. This durability was probably due, in part, to its excellent craftsmanship.

It bears what appear to be the genuine marks of Chief Assayer Antonio Forcada y La Plaza (Appendix I, Figure 52, 11) who held office from 1791 to 1818, and the master silversmith, Caamano, whose mark is described by Anderson.⁷ The tax mark is a flying eagle and the hall-mark an M crowned. All marks are on the bottom and all are well worn but decipherable.

An Antonio Caamano is listed as a member of the Guild of Mexico in 1800, 1801, and 1808.⁸ A ladle, in

⁶ Stephane Faniel, French Art of the 18th c., p. 96.

⁷ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 241.

⁸ Ibid, p. 105.

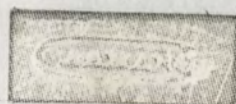
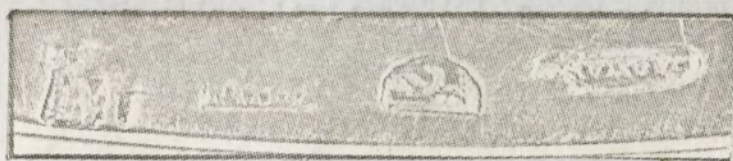


Figure 9. LARGE FLUTED BOWL

the Morley Collection in the Museum of New Mexico also bears this mark.⁹ According to their descriptive material about it two silversmiths with this name, Antonio and Manuel, were listed in Puebla in 1800 and 1820 respectively. Reference is also made to the fact that Don Antonio Caamano executed work designed by Manuel Tolsa, reflecting the trend of the new Academy of San Carlos and Spanish neo-classicism.

According to the above references, this piece was made by one of the Caamanos, either in Mexico City or Puebla, (probably the latter) between 1800 and 1818.

Diameter----14" (35.7 cm)
Depth-----3 3/8" (8.6 cm)
Weight-----2 lbs. 13 1/2 oz.
Marks-----As described and burilada.

⁹
Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 10. 60-21.

ODD PIECES

(Figure 10, a)

There are no marks or inscriptions on this piece to indicate its age or place of origin.

However, stylistically, it conforms with the fashion of decoration with delicate animal motifs which was popular in Mexico during the nineteenth century. Mr. Anderson reproduces a brazier, made and marked in San Luis Potosí between 1837 and 1853, which has supports designed in the form of happy little sea monsters reminiscent of the slightly caricatured sea horses cast for the handles of this piece.¹⁰

Both the tray, which stands on small rectangular feet, and the bowl are simply designed, but the columnar stand and decorated handles indicate a degree of sophistication not likely to be found in the work of a rural artisan. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that this is a nineteenth century piece, probably made in one of the larger cities in Mexico.

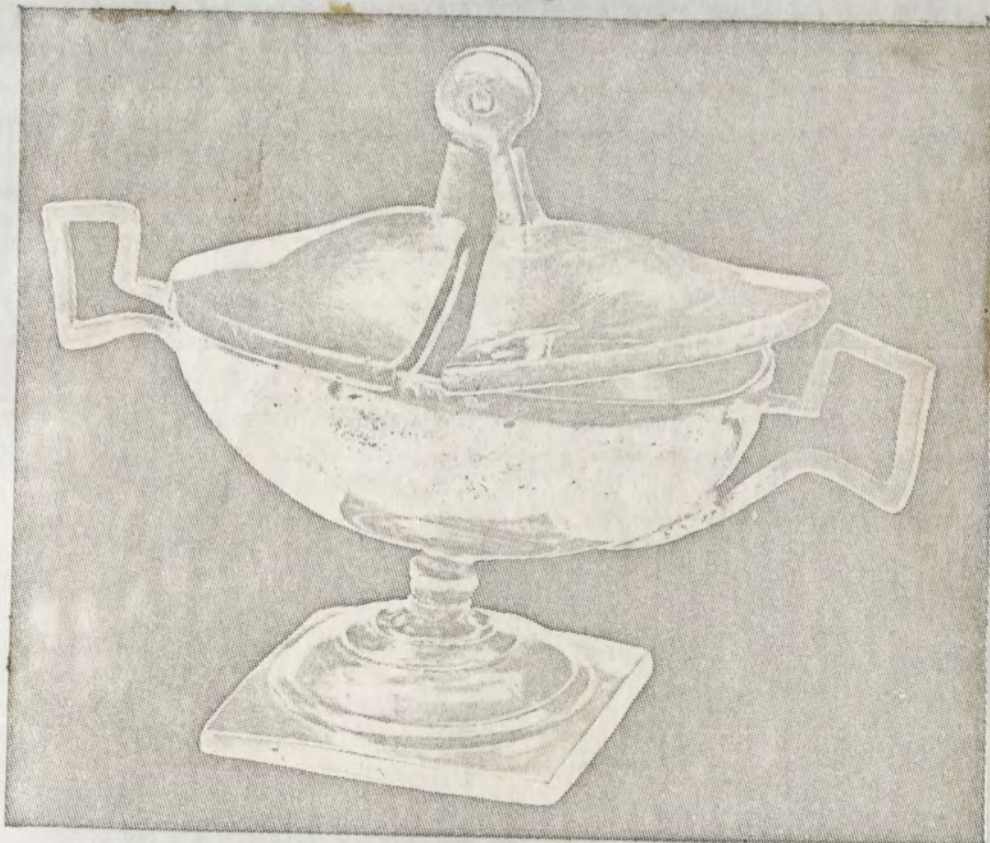
Diameter (length of bowl)-----4 3/4" (12.1 cm)
Height-----3" (7.6 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Marks-----None

10

Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. II, pl. 7.

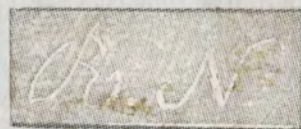


a. Footed Compote



b. Incense Boat

Figure 10. ODD PIECES



ODD PIECES

(Figure 10, b)

This is a traditional incense boat of the type used in the Mission churches of New Mexico. The classicism of its design suggests that it was made in the early nineteenth century, during the Neo-Classic Revival which was stimulated in Mexico by the work of Manuel Tolsa and the Academy of San Carlos.

The lids open from a central hinge which permitted the injection of incense from a small spoon that was usually attached to the boat by an eyelet and chain. A little hole, visible under the left edge of the rim, is probably a scar left by an eyelet which once held the chain and spoon that belonged with this piece. The cast handles are rather badly bent, probably destroying their original shape and the symmetry of the piece as a whole.

The initials "R. N." are hand engraved on the rim. These are very like those found on the bottom of one of the large beakers in this collection (Figure 32). The script has enough of the same characteristics to make it highly possible that they were inscribed by the same hand.

Length of bowl (including handles)-----	5" (12.7 cm)
Width of bowl-----	3 3/4" (9.5 cm)
Height (including hinges)-----	3 1/2" (8.9 cm)
Weight-----	10 oz.
Marks-----	None

FOOTED COMPOTE

(Figure 11)

This could be either an eighteenth or nineteenth century piece. Since there are no marks, and the style is one which has been popular since early in the eighteenth century, it is impossible to make a more definite assignment.

This is the only piece in the collection which is decorated with beading. A narrow border of rather elongated beading separates the first element of the cyma molding from the outside edge of the plate, which seems to differ stylistically and to be of better craftsmanship than the compote cup. Here, tool marks, not visible on the smoothly planished surface of the plate, are quite obvious, especially on the inside. The question arises of whether or not it may have been assembled by "raising" the center of the plate to accommodate the stem, from the works of two different silversmiths, possibly from different time periods.

The name "R.^o Zepeda" is hand engraved on the bottom of the plate.

Diameter (bowl)-----	4 3/8" (11.1 cm)
Diameter (plate)----	6 3/8" (16.2 cm)
Height-----	3 5/16" (8.5 cm)
Weight-----	14 oz.
Marks-----	None



Figure 11. FOOTED COMPOTE

SMALL BOWL

(Figure 12)

Another piece which embodies provincial characteristics is this small bowl which was created for some unknown purpose. There is a bolt in the middle of the bottom which must have been functional, but just what its function might have been is a mystery.

One explanation might be that it was made originally as a drip pan for a candlestick which was bolted to the bottom. The shape of the bowl suggests this use, although usually early candlestick holders, designed with more or less this style pan, had only one handle. If the bolt were not placed so deliberately in the center, one might suggest that this was a primitive method of mending.

Another suggestion might be that it was used in the service of the church and was attached to some kind of stand. It is badly dented, but even so hammer marks from "raising" show. The small, cramped handles are hand-formed and crudely decorated. A childish capital A, with a triangle at the top, has been struck into the soft metal with a small chisel. It probably was made locally.

Diameter----5" (12.7 cm)
Depth-----2 1/8" (5.4 cm)
Weight-----13 oz
Marks-----None



Figure 12. SMALL BOWL

ODD PIECES

(Figure 13, a)

The provincial quality of this piece seems evident. It is perfect visual evidence of stylistic elements noted in earlier pieces: massive simplicity, textured surfaces, simple organic design which arises from the method of manufacture, asymmetry, unusual weight, and absence of marks.

In this case asymmetry is emphasized by different placement of the two handles, which appear to have been cast and then attached with crude soldering. In spite of its imperfections (or perhaps because of them) this piece has considerable impact of the kind which results from a direct statement, made with respect for material, dependent upon its inherent quality for visual satisfaction.

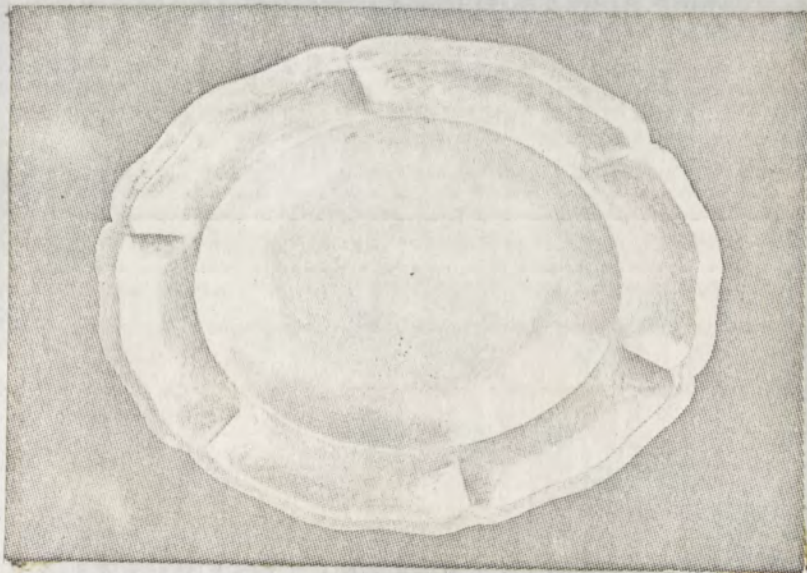
It has fourteen ribs which are sharply pressed from the outside above a crimped edge where the bottom joins the sides. The ribs are spaced fairly evenly at probably the exact intervals which the artisan felt was necessary to obtain sufficient rigidity to support the piece.

There is nothing from which to judge its date or origin.

Diameter----5 1/2" (14.0 cm)
Depth-----2 1/2" (6.4 cm)
Weight-----12 oz.
Marks-----None



a. Small Bowl



b. Butter Plate



Figure 13. ODD PIECES

ODD PIECES

(Figure 13, b)

This small butter dish is a six-lobed eighteenth century design, but it was almost certainly made in the early twentieth century.

After 1895 the Republic of Mexico did not hall-mark silver. Instead, stamping for content of pure silver only by the mint was placed on a voluntary basis. An artisan could present an article for marking if he so desired. The mint then marked it with three punches: an L, meaning ley (law), a number indicating the silver content in thousandths of the piece assayed, and an eagle (Appendix I, 58, 23).

The marks on this piece are the number 900, and an eagle. The eagle is not the same as the one published by Anderson and there is no L (law) stamp. However, the fact that the number and an eagle are affixed indicates that it was probably made in Mexico after 1895.

Diameter----3 1/2" (8.9 cm)
Depth-----1/4" (.6 cm)
Weight-----3 oz.
Marks-----As described.

PLAIN PLATES

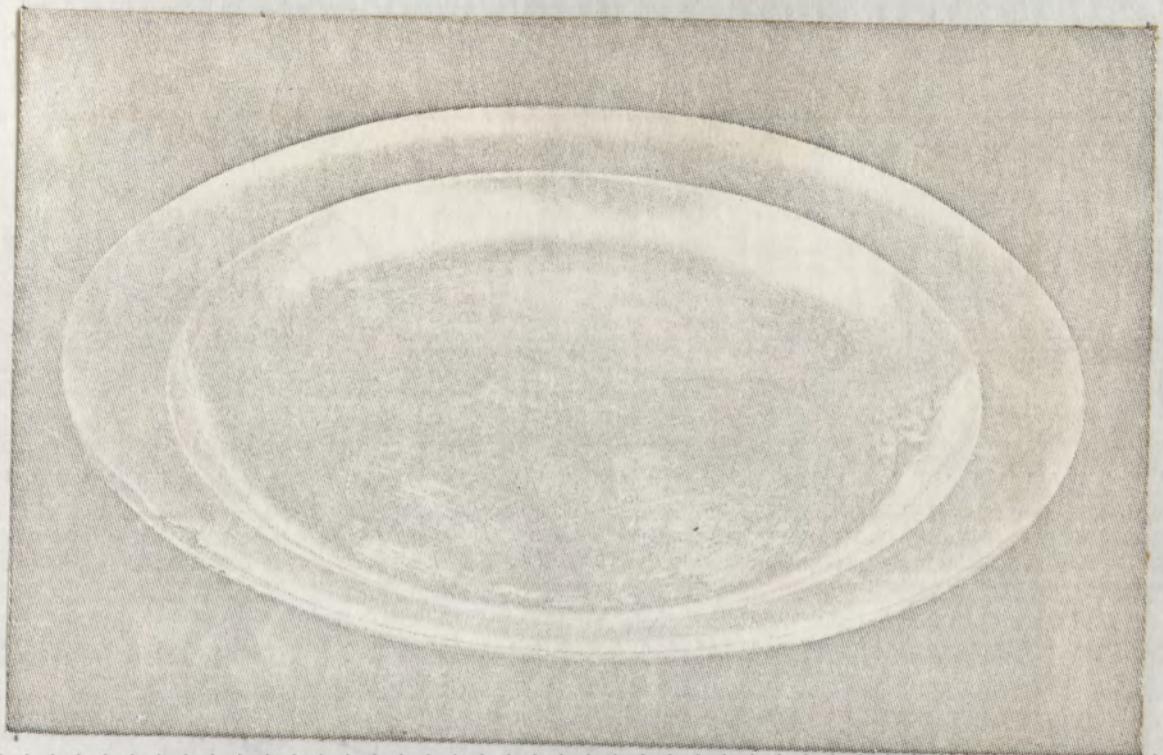
(Figure 14)

There are ten plain plates like the one photographed in the collection. They are identical except for small variations in size and weight.

One of them bears the four marks reproduced in group A. Another is marked as in group B, and eight have a single mark, either a T. or an I. Marquez, as shown in illustration C. They are all precisely crafted with smooth surfaces and perfect symmetry. Their only distinguishing characteristic is weight.

The marks in group A (on one plate) are those of Chief Assayer Joaquín Dávila Madrid, 1819-1823 (Appendix I, Figure 54), and the master silversmith José Felipe Mexía, who was licensed in Mexico City in 1815.¹¹ Mr. Anderson states that he has never seen what he believes to be a genuine Dávila mark, giving as his reason that the M crowned and the rampant lion punches which he examined were so nearly like those of Dávila's predecessor Forcada that they almost defy detection, yet they could not stand up to the transparency test described in Chapter III. He feels that if Dávila had wanted marks distinctly his own, he would have designed something different from those of Forcada and that if he had been

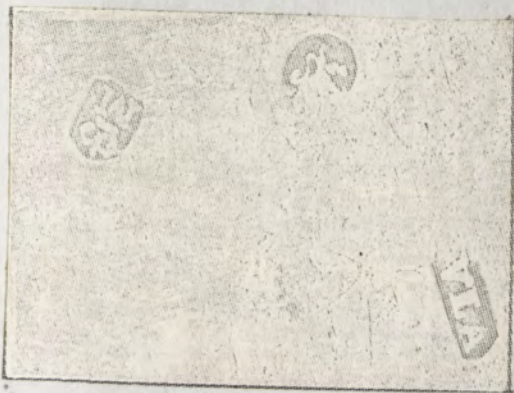
¹¹ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, list, pp. 397-413.



A.



B.



C.



Figure 14. PLAIN PLATES

happy with the Forcada marks he would simply have used them without alteration.¹² The reproductions Mr. Anderson publishes of the Forcada marks in question (Appendix I, Figure 53, 14) are so indefinite that it is almost impossible to make a comparison with the marks on this piece, and raises the question as to whether or not this might be a set of genuine Davila marks.

Taken in conjunction with the fact that Mexía's (silversmith's) mark appears to be genuine, and following Mr. Anderson's own assumption that one genuine mark on a piece automatically authenticates others with it, this question must be seriously considered.

"MEXIA" marks like this are found on two plain plates in the Morley Collection in the Museum of New Mexico along with the genuine marks of Chief Assayer Cayetano Buitrón, who served from 1823 to 1843 (Appendix I, Figure 55, 16).¹³ Since Mexía was licensed in 1815, it is probable that he would have worked during both Dávila and Buitrón's term in office.

The other mark on this plate is stamped on the face. It is "D. SAENZ," and is probably an owner's mark such as were often designed by silversmiths for purchasers of their work (Appendix I, Figure 61).

¹² Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, list, pp. 327-28.

¹³ Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. Nos. A. 10.60-31 a and b.

Another significant point is the difference between this set of marks and those in group B, undoubtedly forgeries of Davila's dies. They are identical with forged marks reproduced on the top of Appendix I, Figure 54. Dies in group A are so obviously superior to the forged ones in group B that one is tempted to authenticate them without hesitation. However, the only sure way to do so would be to submit them to Mr. Anderson's transparency test.

The other eight plates have only one mark, "I.(or T.) MARQUEZ" stamped on the face and so similar in design to the probably owners mark described earlier that one is lead to assume that this is one also.

Evidence indicates that these are early nineteenth century pieces, with the possibility that one (with marks in group A) may bear the genuine marks of Chief Assayer Joaquín Dávila Madrid, and so might be firmly dated between 1819 and 1832.

Diameters----Vary from $8 \frac{3}{16}$ " to $8 \frac{3}{4}$ " (20.8 cm to 22.3 cm)
Depths-----Approx. $\frac{3}{4}$ " (1.9 cm)
Weights-----Vary from 14 oz. to 18 oz.
Marks-----As described with some buriladas.

FIVE LOBED PLATE

(Figure 15)

There is only one plate in the collection in this design, a typical eighteenth century pattern with five broad, shallow lobes. Three equally spaced hollow-molded lines form a cyma border which adds weight and distinction to an otherwise perfectly plain piece.

It is stamped with the genuine mark of Chief Assayer Antonio Forcada y La Plaza, 1791-1818, with a flying eagle (Appendix I, Figure 52, 11), and an M crowned, and a silversmith's mark "RDGA."

The temptation is great to assign this mark to master silversmith Jose-Maria Rodallega, one of the most famous artists in Mexico around the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. Anderson gives his working dates as 1772-1812.¹⁴ The time element is right as he was working during the time Forcada served as Chief Assayer, so the two stamps should appear together on any pieces legally marked. However, this particular contraction of his name is not authenticated as one of his genuine marks. Those are "RGA.," "ROGA," and "LLEGA."¹⁵ It is possible that Rodallega had another stamp with the

¹⁴ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936. Vol. I, p. 235.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 236.

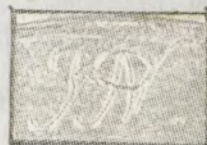
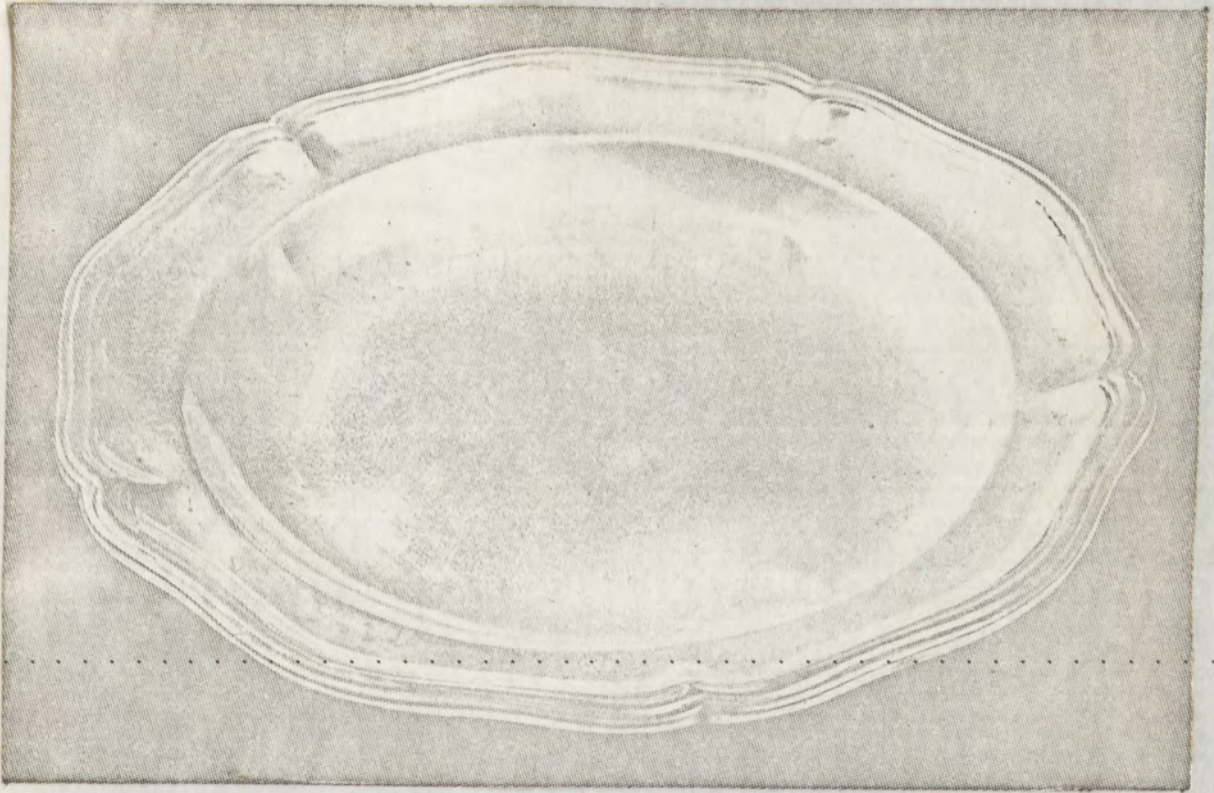


Figure 15. FIVE-LOBED PLATE

the letters "RDGA," but this is not subject to proof with references presently available. There is a monogram which seems to be a design composed of three letters, "TPN," scratched on the back with a hand-graver.

A four-lobed oval platter, similar in style to this plate from the Morley Collection in the Museum at Santa Fe bears this same "RDGA."¹⁶ There is no other licensed silver-smith listed whose name might be represented by these letters. Although it cannot be assigned to Rodallega with certainty, it can be dated by Forcada's dates, 1791-1818, and ascribed to the great master's period.

Diameter----9 1/8" (23.2 cm)
Depth-----15/16" (2.4 cm)
Weight-----1 lb. 3 oz.
Marks-----As described.

¹⁶ Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 10. 60-29.

SIX-LOBED PLATE

(Figure 16)

While still a typical eighteenth century design, this plate has some stylistic elements which distinguish it from others of the same type in the collection. The lobes are deeper, the rim narrower, the plate depression shallower, and the cyma border is more sharply defined with a distinct variation in size and distribution of the hollow-molded lines from which it is formed.

It is stamped on the face with the marks of Guatemala-Chiapas, a crown and Santiago over two peaks (Appendix I, Figure 61). There is also a silversmith's mark, "MAR F. ARES" from which at least two letters seem to have been deliberately erased. No reference is available concerning any artist of this name.

What is now the State of Chiapas was a province of Guatemala until 1823. Both areas used these two marks as well as several other designs of small crowns and variations of Santiago (or eagles) flying over peaks.¹⁷ These marks are easily distinguishable from those of Mexico because they are usually smaller and more delicate. According to the records of the Museum of New Mexico, the silversmith's guild of Guatemala was organized in 1745.¹⁸ Therefore, a tentative

¹⁷ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 9.

¹⁸ Museum of New Mexico, Ledger. Acq. No. A. 10. 60-2-2 and b.

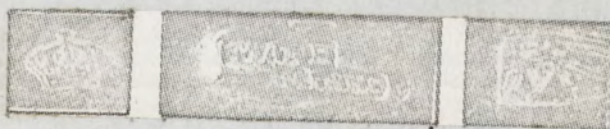


Figure 16. SIX-LOBED PLATE

dating of this piece should probably be no earlier than that time. Marking before then was probably sporadic.

The collections of the Museum of New Mexico include several Guatemalan pieces. Some bear these same two marks; others have differently designed crowns and Santiagos over three peaks.

A crude "R A" is engraved on the bottom rim of this plate. It was probably made in Guatemala City during the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

Diameter----8 3/4" (22.3 cm)
Depth-----3/4" (1.9 cm)
Weight-----1 lb.
Marks-----As described with burilada.

EIGHT-LOBED PLATE

(Figure 17)

This eighteenth century design has eight lobes of alternating pattern, making it more Baroque in feeling than others in the collection with almost the same hollow-molded cyma rims. Also, the bottom of the plate is smaller, allowing for a more gradual, and wider, transitional plane between it and the rim.

The genuiness of its marks are questionable. They are those of Chief Assayer Diego Gonzalez de La Cueva, 1733-1788, and an artisan's mark which has been deliberately defaced beyond recognition. Gonzalez' mark is only partly legible. It appears to be the top of his genuine mark (Appendix I, Figure 45, 4), but is worn too much to make an identification. The hall-mark, an eagle with spread wings, closely resembles one which Mr. Anderson authenticates as genuine (same plate, Figure 4), and also one he says is a forgery (Appendix I, Figure 46, 6-D). However, reproductions of the marks used for reference are so poor that it is hard to make identifications by comparison. It seems to be more like the genuine mark than the forged one, but cannot be definitely identified with it.

The same thing is true of the tax mark, a "Pillars of Hercules" with an M surmounted by a helmeted head and a crown. Seven variations of this symbol are shown in figures forty five, forty six and forty seven. The one here does

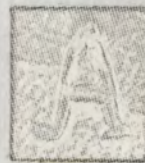
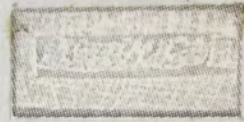
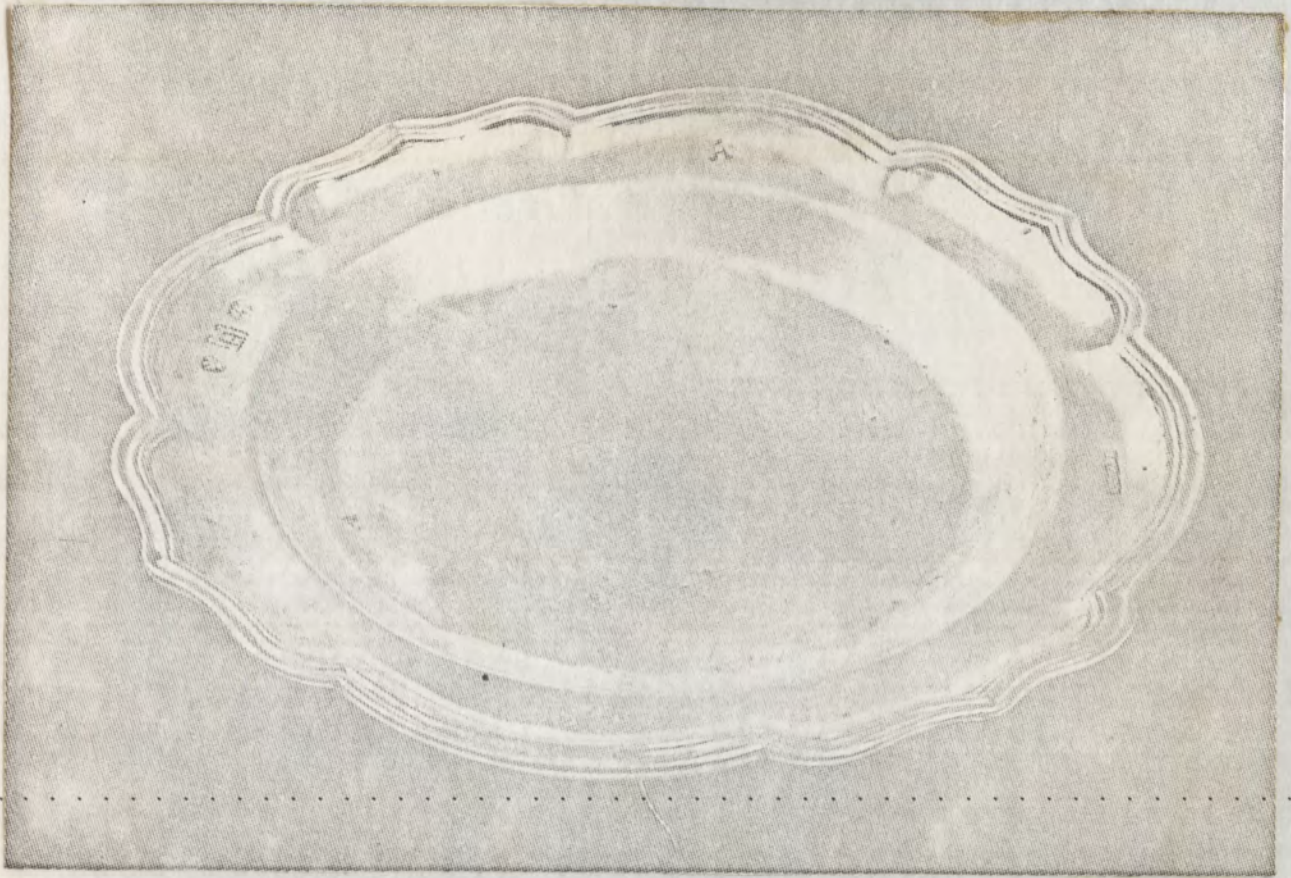


Figure 17. EIGHT-LOBED PLATE

not seem to be exactly like any of them, but it looks more like one of the forgeries than any other (Appendix I, Figure 47, 6-B). If any one of these marks could be authenticated, this piece could be firmly dated between 1733 and 1778. However, comparison will have to be made with better reproductions of the marks in question before dating can be certain.

Other marks are all amateurishly engraved. They are: a crude "A" on the top, two scratchy "X's" attached together, and "teresa Garacia." The last two are on the bottom.

Diameter----9 1/4" (23.5 cm)
Depth-----1" (2.5 cm)
Weight-----1 lb.
Marks-----As described with burilada.

SIX-LOBED PLATE

(Figure 18)

This small rimmed plate exemplifies the stylistic modifications which were apt to result when a traditional design was copied by a provincial craftsman. When compared to the other rimmed plates described (Figures 15, 16, and 17) one sees that it is considerably deeper, as was the large platter discussed earlier (Figure 5,a). It too was probably intended to serve as an "all purpose dish," since it could have been used for a dinner plate, a small vegetable bowl, or as a soup bowl.

The basic design has been simplified. There are no short "ribs" to lift the edge of the rim at the junctures of its shallower lobes. The border is molded by a single line, clumsily "pressed" with a sharp tool and assymetry is created by inexpert tooling which defines the periphery of the bowl, producing slightly varying widths in the flatter rim. While it is smoother than some of the other provincial pieces under examination, a lightly rippled surface reveals the method of "raising," its total visual impact is different, provincial in character and design.

The only identifying marks are two crude monograms, as illustrated. One is executed in a series of dots, possibly with a leather punch. There is no way to date it, but



Figure 18. SIX-LOBED PLATE

certainly there is no reason to believe that it was not
made in New Mexico.

Diameter----8 3/4" (22.3 cm)
Depth-----1 5/8" (4.1 cm)
Weight-----14 oz.
Marks-----None

SIX-LOBED PLATES

(Figure 19)

There are six plates in this design, with shallow lobes and thickened edges without borders.

Three are stamped with marks in group A. These are the genuine punches of Chief Assayer Antonio Forcada y la Plaza (Appendix I, Figure 52, 11), and the mark of master silversmith Alejandro Antonio de Cañas, who was licensed in Mexico City on September 27, 1786.¹⁹ He served as veedor in 1794 and 1804. He was not only working, but was also a fellow official during Forcada's term in office (1791-1818). Therefore, these three plates can be assigned to Cañas and dated between 1791 and 1818. The name "CHABES," stamped on the top, is probably an owner's mark.

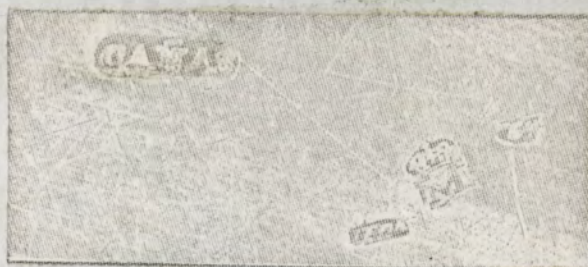
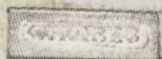
Two plates bear marks in group B. They seem to be forgeries of Forcada's dies. His genuine stamp was "FCDA," as above, not "FORCADA." The hall-mark, a small crown, resembles those used in Guatemala-Chiapas (Appendix I, Figure 61). The tax mark, a flying eagle, is not like any which have been examined during this study. The same owner's mark, "CHABES," as above, suggests that they may have been made at about the same time.

They are also stamped with a silversmith's mark which may be authentic. A Francisco Galván is listed as an unlicensed owner of a silver shop in 1792. He was licensed in

¹⁹ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I., list, pp. 397-413.

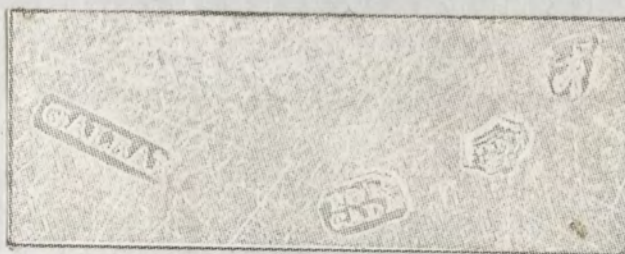


A.



B.

"



C.

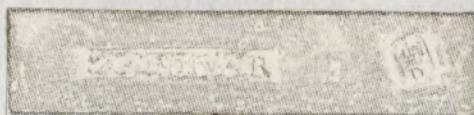
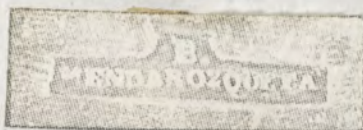


Figure 19. SIX-LOBED PLATES

Mexico City in 1799 and 1807.²⁰ This same "GALBAN" is on a plate in the Museum of New Mexico collection.²¹ It seems that this may have been one of those instances when a silversmith used forged marks with his own die in order to evade taxes.

The last plate in the group (with marks in group C) is fascinating. There are notable stylistic differences between it and the other five. The balance is different. Even though it is three ounces heavier than any of the others, the edges are thinner. It is smaller in diameter, is deeper, and has three buriladas made with a distinctive burin.

It is stamped on the top with two marks. The name "B. MENDAROSQUETA," is probably an owner's mark (compare to Figure 14). The other stamp is "ZALDIVAR," followed by a little mark like a straight apostrophe and an emblem composed of a "D" surmounted by a crown. These are completely different, stylistically, from any dies examined during the course of this study. The letters are designed with different proportions and are cut into the die with more precision. The emblem is more precisely and skillfully made than any other mark found in this collection.

An intriguing speculation is aroused by this combination

²⁰ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I., list, p. 234.

²¹ Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A.10.60-33.

of distinguishing characteristics. Could this plate have belonged originally to one of the nephews of Captain-General and Adelantado Don Juan de Oñate, who brought the first colony of settlers into New Mexico on May 4, 1598?

The two Zaldivar brothers were from Zacatecas. They were Governor Oñates' most trusted lieutenants throughout the long and difficult task of organizing, leading and establishing the colony on the banks of the Rio Grande in northern New Mexico.

The colony consisted of one hundred and thirty families, two hundred and seventy single men, and eleven Franciscan friars. They traveled with eighty three wagons and carts. They herded seven thousand cattle and other domestic animals.²² These families came into the new land to live forever. They brought with them many of the necessities, and some refinements, from their homeland. Paul Horgan graphically describes it in Volume I of The Great River:

The colony moved safely on with all of its burdens on pack animals and in the two-wheeled wagons. The wagons were made of cross sections of cottonwood trunks, joined by a pine-log axle on which rested the wagon bed four feet square. The wagon sides were made of slender branches lashed upright. The shaft of the wagon was of pine, and to it were chained the yokes of the oxen. There went all the household treasures and trifles, the possessions that meant personality and home and ways of doing things, from sacred images to dishes to books and clothing, whether humble or grand.²³

²² Paul Horgan, The Great River, Vol. I, p. 161.

²³ Ibid, p. 167.

The story of the two brothers reads like romantic fiction. They were the strong right arms of Governor Oñate during the first trying days at San Juan de los Caballeros, near the juncture of the Chama River with the Rio Grande. Juan, the elder, was slain at the first battle of Ácoma on December 1, 1598. Vicente, then twenty five years old, led the small force which subdued Ácoma in a bloody three day battle late in January, 1599.

The idea that this simple little plate might have ridden in one of those wagons is exciting. It is possible. It could have been kept by one of the families who escaped to Paseo del Norte after the Pueblo uprising of 1680, and brought back to Santa Fe when they returned with de Vargas in 1693. There it could have been used until sometime in the eighteenth or nineteenth century (indicated by style of lettering in owner's mark) when a certain Don B. Mendarozqueta handed it to a silversmith to stamp with his own name, possibly along with others which he ordered made to match.

Fanciful? Yes. Yet questions aroused by stylistic differences and the marks on this piece, when considered in relationship to the historical background, merit consideration. A careful comparison of this plate with other sixteenth century pieces should be made. Archives of Zacatecas, Mexico City, perhaps even Spain, should be searched for any record of these marks. Should the emblem prove to be a device of either the Oñate or Zaldivar families, it would be almost indisputable proof that this was indeed an object come down through four centuries, mute evidence of the first

colonists in the United States.²⁴

GROUP A.

Diameters-----9 3/4" (24.8 cm)

Depths-----3/4" (1.9 cm)

Weights-----1 lb. 2 oz.

Marks-----As described with buriladas.

GROUP B.

Diameters-----9 1/2" (24.2 cm)

Depths-----3/4" (1.9 cm)

Weights-----1 lb. 2 oz.

Marks-----As described.

GROUP C.

Diameter-----9" (22.9 cm)

Depth-----11/16" (2.1 cm)

Weight-----1 lb. 5 oz.

Marks-----As described with three buriladas.

²⁴Some believe that St. Augustine, Florida was the first Spanish colony. It was a military establishment with a fort (started in 1638) built to protect Spanish treasure ships, not a settlement of colonists.

FIVE-LOBED PLATES

(Figure 20)

The only difference, stylistically, between this group of five plates and the ones just discussed is in the number of lobes. Two bear marks in illustration A, one those in group B, and two those in group C.

All marks seem to be forgeries. Those in group A are so poorly stamped that it would be impossible to identify them, often a deliberate intention of a forger. Two of the dies, the eagle and the rampant lion, would both have been tax-marks had they been used legally. There is no chief assayer's mark, and only a fragment of one which might have been a silversmith's.

Those in set number B appear to match forged marks published by Anderson (Appendix I, Figure 53, 14-A). This conclusion is based chiefly on the tax-mark (compare to Appendix I, Figure 52, 11). A silversmith's mark with blurred last letters "BRA" is unidentifiable.

The "FCDA" in group C seems to be the same as the one above. The tax-mark and the hall-mark are different. This flying eagle is the one mentioned earlier in the discussion of a forged mark (Figure 19). The hall-mark is like a forged one (Appendix I, Figure 53, 14-B) although it seems to be a clearer punch than the one reproduced in Anderson. A silversmith's mark, "RODA," possibly a forgery of Rodallega's mark,

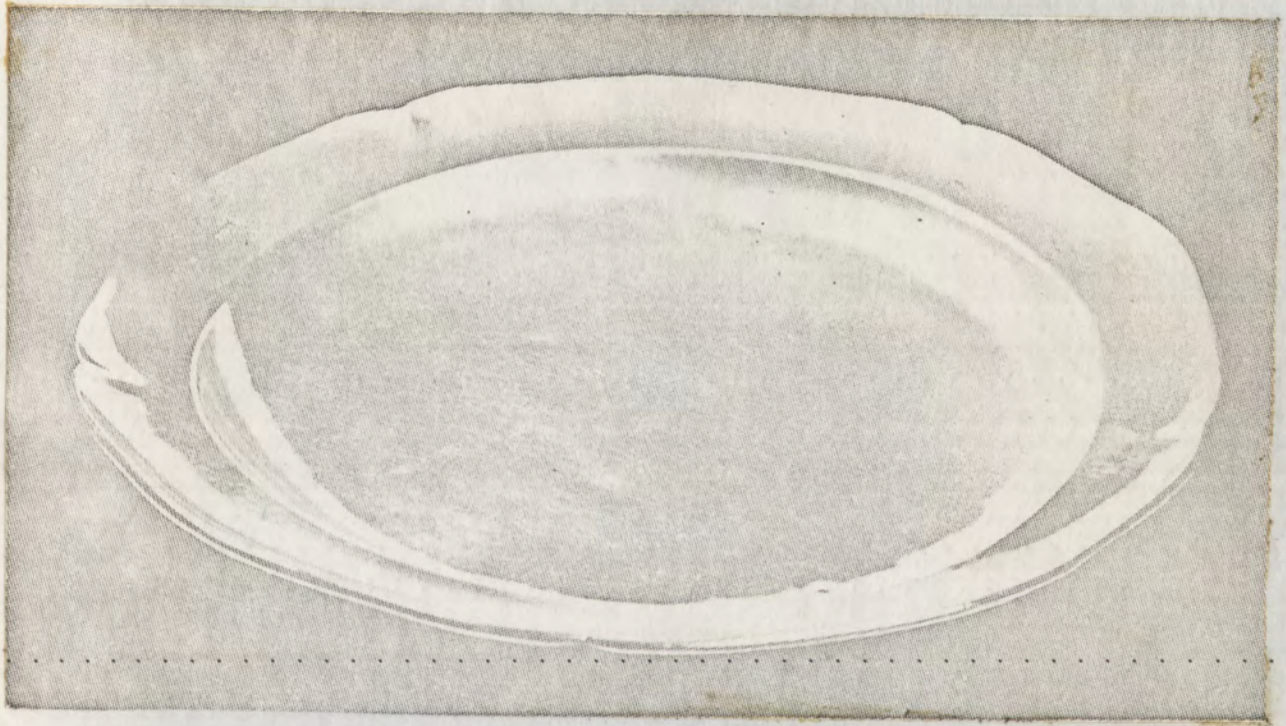


Figure 20. FIVE-LOBED PLATES

completes the set on one of the plates. The other bears the name "CARTAM" and the same owner's mark "CHABES" discussed earlier in relationship to the plates illustrated on figure nineteen.

All of the marks in this group of plates are on top except for two which have buriladas on the bottom. One has a crude, hand-drawn "F" scratched on the bottom.

Diameters-----From 9 1/4" to 9 1/2" (23.5 to 24.2 cm)
Depths-----From 7/8" to 1" (2.3 to 2.5 cm)
Weights-----From 1 lb. to 1 lb. 4 oz.
Marks-----As described.

.....

CUP

(Figure 21, a)

There are four cups in the collection. This one, according to Mrs. Field's note, was received from a descendant of the Maxwell family, whose household is described by Ruth Laughlin as of about 1885:

French Canadians, such as Ceran St. Vrain and Carlos Beaubien, had married into old Spanish families. Lucien B. Maxwell married Beaubien's daughter, who inherited the great tract of land known as the Maxwell Land Grant. Its extent must have been one of Armijo's lordly gestures, for its 1,700,000 acres made Maxwell the owner of the largest private estate in the United States. The Hacienda near Cimarron was run with typical Spanish hospitality, and the solid silver on the table was never set for less than two dozen guests.²⁵

This cup is straight sided, with a concave stem and shallow foot. The only decoration is a simple molded rim and a cast handle. There are no marks or distinguishing characteristics to indicate its age. The quality of the craftsmanship is professional, so it probably came from Mexico City. However, it could just as easily have been brought in from the eastern part of the United States by traders during the nineteenth century.

Diameter----4" (10.2 cm)
Height-----3 3/8" (8.6 cm)
Weight-----7 1/2 oz.
Marks-----None

²⁵ Ruth Laughlin, Cabelleros, p. 71



a.



b.



Figure 21. CUPS

CUP

(Figure 21, b)

Two of the cups (of which this is one), are wide and shallow, a shape widely copied in Europe from Oriental porcelain tea-bowls during the early part of the eighteenth century. According to Edward Wenham, the first author to bring the Field Collection to the attention of the public in an article published in International Studio in July, 1931, the handles on these two cups were added at a later date:

...each of them is slightly over 4 inches in diameter at the rim and made of remarkably heavy silver; but, despite the thickness of the metal, the bowls were raised by hammering up the shapes. The plainly wrought handles were added some time after the bowls were made, because they are manifestly inspired by the Oriental small tea-bowls or cups. These bowls were reproduced in silver by European craftsmen from the original porcelain pieces imported from China and as the Eastern examples were never fitted with handles, it is plain that handles on these Spanish-American examples are seldom, if ever, contemporary with the bowls.²⁶

It is stamped with marks which are almost certainly forged. The "MHRRAZ" was probably an attempt to forge the mark of Chief Assayer Mucharraz, who held office between 1868 and 1880 (Appendix I, Figure 57, 19). His mark, as authenticated by Anderson, is his full name spelled out in capital letters. The tax mark (eagle) also seems to be a

²⁶

Edward Wenham, "Spanish American Silver in New Mexico," p. 33.

forgery of that used by Mucharraz. Comparison with the one photographed in figure fifty seven reveals obvious differences, especially in the shape of the background die. There is no hall-mark and only a fragment of a silversmith's mark. It could be a genuine old piece, perhaps early eighteenth century, to which a handle and late nineteenth century forged marks have been added.

Diameter----4 9/16" (11.6 cm)
Height-----1 14/16" (4.8 cm)
Weight-----7 oz.
Marks-----As described.

.....

CUPS

(Figure 22, a)

There can be no doubt that this cup is one of the few pieces in the Field Collection which is not Spanish Colonial.

Stylistically, it is a typically nineteenth century coffee cup design decorated with a fine "rope" beading below a molded rim and around the base. It is considerably smaller than the other three cups in the collection.

It is stamped with "H. H. HOLMAN & CO. PURE COIN." No company in the United States of this name is listed in American Silversmiths and Their Marks by Stephen Guernsey Cook Ensco, but undoubtedly, since it is not an English mark, this is where it came from. It was probably made in one of the eastern cities and brought into New Mexico by a trading company over the Santa Fe Trail during the mid to late nineteenth century.

Diameter----3 1/2" (8.9 cm)
Height-----2 1/2" (6.4 cm)
Weight-----6 oz.
Marks-----As described.

CUP

(Figure 22, b)

This cup clearly reveals the derivation of its Oriental style, while at the same time demonstrating some striking



a.



b.



Figure 22. CUPS

characteristics of provincialism. Here, a shallow hemispherical tea-bowl has obviously been transformed into a cup by the addition of both base and handle. The base is crudely made and attached with rough soldering. The handle is better made and is attached with greater skill, indicating that the two parts may have been added at different times.

Hammer marks mar the surface of the "raised" bowl, which, in the original design, was probably perfectly plain. Its balance and symmetry indicates that it was made by an artisan with respectable skill. This certainly cannot be said of the amateur who laboriously inscribed the decorations and monograms it now bears: a border around the bottom composed of scratchy triangular motifs reminiscent of Indian designs, and three monograms, "M," "S," and "JMB," which break into another geometric border around the middle of the bowl. The "S" is turned backwards. These seem to have been partly scratched and partly gouged with a sharp tool.

There is no way to date this piece. The original tea-bowl might have been made in an urban center in the eighteenth century, but the handle, base, and decorations are obviously the work of an unskilled person possibly done later in New Mexico. It is exceptionally heavy in proportion to its size.

Diameter----4 5/8" (11.8 cm)
Height-----2 1/4" (5.7 cm)
Weight-----15 oz.
Marks-----None

MUG

(Figure 23)

There are sixteen large mugs in the collection.

According to Wenham most of these were originally beakers to which handles have been added at a later date.²⁷ A beaker was used as a drinking vessel as far back as the fourteenth century. The form probably originated from the use of the straight section of an ox-horn with one end stopped up. Silver beakers were popular in Elizabethan England. By the seventeenth century straight beakers developed into various "flared" forms.²⁸ By the eighteenth century both beakers and mugs had lost popularity in Europe in favor of cups and tumblers.

The crudity with which this handle is joined to the beaker indicates that this is such an old beaker. This is not necessarily so, but it is hard to imagine a silversmith skilled enough to make either the beaker or the beautiful snake handle, doing so unprofessional a job of assembling. It seems likely that the inscription "T^o 2o Mo de 1866," applies only to the handle. The date probably refers to the birth or wedding date of an individual whose initials were "C.C.A." which are inscribed on the opposite side of the handle. The handle design makes this one of the outstanding

²⁷ Edward Wenham, "Spanish American Silver in the United States," p. 33.

²⁸ Seymour B. Wyler, The Book of Old Silver, pp. 47-48.

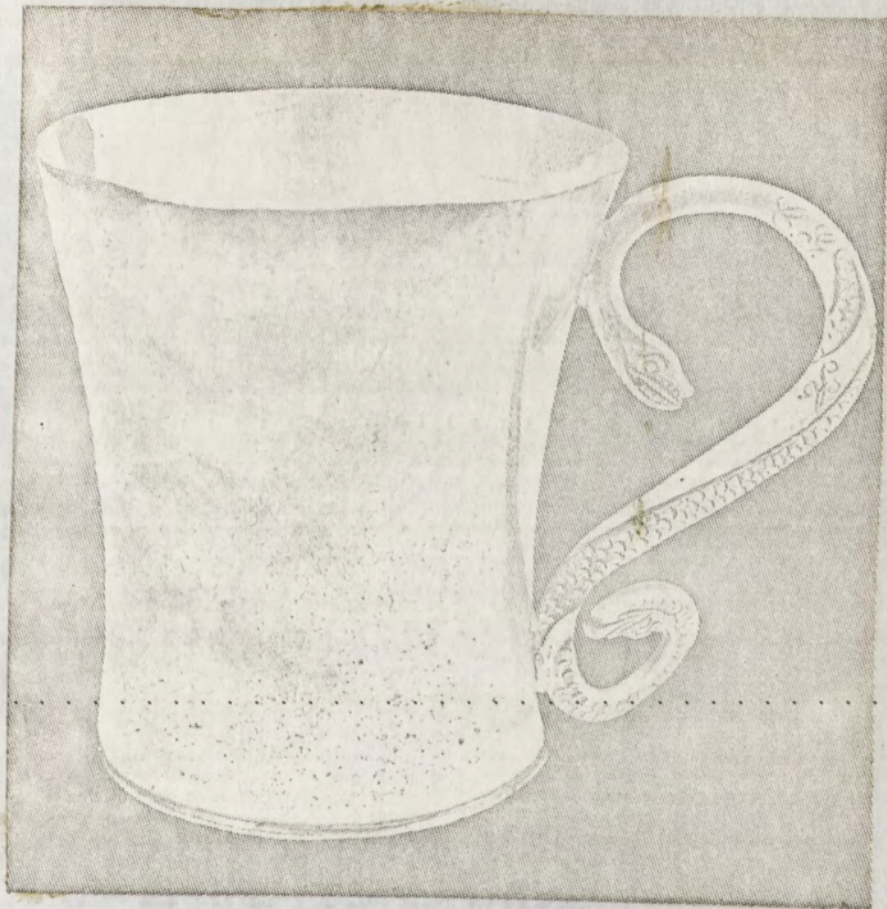


Figure 23. MUG

pieces in the collection.

Diameter (top)----3 5/8" (9.2 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-2 7/8" (7.3 cm)
Depth-----4 1/8" (10.5 cm)
Marks-----None

MUG

(Figure 24)

The detail enlargement mounted below the photograph of this mug illustrates the extreme crudity with which some of these pieces were made. This is another piece which, if there is such a classification, should be called "Spanish-American Provincial."

It is made by the simple method of hammering a sheet of silver to the proper proportions and wrapping it around a pre-formed bottom, then welding it together in a seam under the handle. The base is unusually heavy and inexpertly made. The crudely decorated handle seems to have been hand crafted. It is attached to the beaker with a heavy bolt, as shown in the illustration.

Some of its asymmetry and surface texture is, no doubt, the result of hard wear. It may have undergone the kind of usage described in reference to a cup which belonged to the Delgado family of Santa Fe, now in the collection of the Museum of New Mexico:

Family said it had been used for many years as a communal drinking cup, kept outside of kitchen on a bench with water bucket. As each person drank water he banged the cup against the bench by way of "rinsing" until it was broken....²⁹

There is no way to date it, nor, since the whole piece is crudely made, is there any reason to assume that the handle was added to an original beaker. However, the

²⁹Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 60. 25-1/4.



Figure 24.MUG

beaker shape suggests that it might be an early piece,
possibly made in New Mexico.

Diameter (top)----3 13/16" (9.7 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-2 1/2" (6.4 cm)
Height-----4 1/8" (10.5 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Marks-----None

MUGS (pairs)

(Figure 25, a and b)

These four mugs are two pairs, the only matched ones in the collection. The two sets differ slightly in design and size.

The first set of mugs (in photograph) has a small base, a narrow, lined border, and flares less at the bottom than those in Figure b. Both have cast "tear drop" handles which are a little different in design and placement on the beakers.

There are no marks. The only supposition which can be made is that, because of the excellent craftsmanship, they were probably made in Mexico. The handle designs suggest that they are possibly eighteenth century. The vogue for cups and tumblers, instead of beakers, which prevailed in Europe by the eighteenth century, would probably not have reached the colonies until the middle of the century. A time lag of about twenty to fifty years usually accompanied the transposition of styles.

a. Diameter (top)----4" (10.2 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-3 15/16" (10.0 cm)
Height-----4 1/2" (11.5 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Mark-----None

b. Diameter (top)----3 5/8" (9.2 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-2 3/4" (7.0 cm)
Height-----3 7/8" (9.9 cm)
Marks-----None



a.



b.

Figure 25. MUGS (pairs)

MUG

(Figure 26)

This mug has been so badly dented that it is hard to distinguish between hammer marks and those resulting from hard wear.

Visually, it appears to be an old beaker to which an eighteenth century cast handle has been attached. While inexpert joining is not nearly so obvious here as it is on other mugs, it still does not have the precision of a professional piece. (Compare to Figure 27.) It has a badly drawn "Y.C.A." hand engraved on the bottom. The design of the beaker is simplicity itself, with only a narrow base which has been formed by pressing a tool into the soft metal just above the jointure with the bottom.

There is no way to either date or assign a point of origin to this piece from available evidence.

Diameter (top)----3 3/8" (8.6 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-2 5/8" (6.7 cm)
Height-----4" (10.2 cm)
Weight-----11 oz.
Marks-----None.

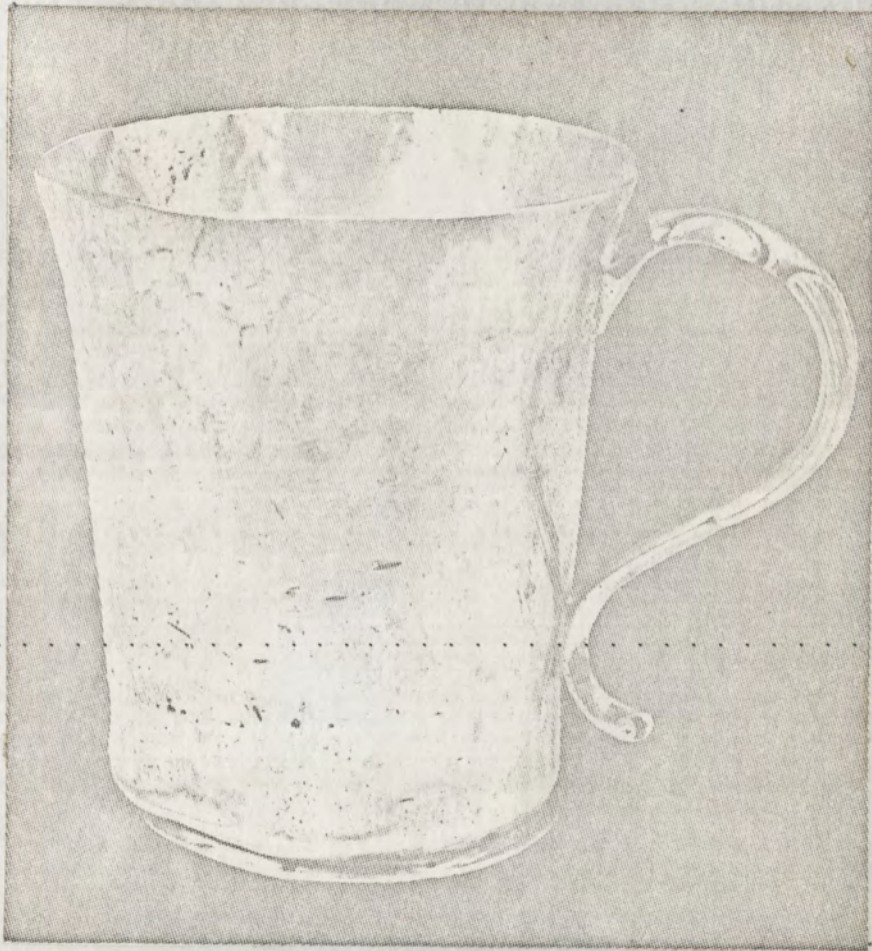


Figure 26. MUG

MUG

(Figure 27)

This mug is probably late nineteenth or early twentieth century. This judgement is based on the forged marks it bears. They have no meaning in relationship to legal Mexican hall-marks. Since it is obviously the product of a master craftsman, there would seem to be little point in applying these marks before 1895, when it could have been legally marked. However, as has been pointed out, silver shops in Mexico City continued to stamp with an assortment of marks into the twentieth century, to make their work more readily salable to gullible collectors of antique silver (Figure 59). No record of these strange little marks has been found in the course of this study.

Stylistically, it could be late eighteenth century. It is "tulip-shaped," one of the most popular tumbler styles (with or without a foot) of that period in Europe, and is decorated with Neo-classic simplicity.³⁰ However, since this style is still popular at the present time, it cannot be dated on the basis of style alone. The interior is gold washed.

The initials "ARDA" are stamped on the outside of the handle, and a monogram "R^o," with what appears to be a

³⁰ Stephane Faniel, French Art of the 18th Century, p. 100.

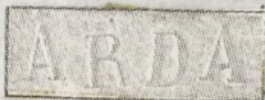
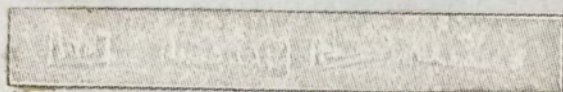
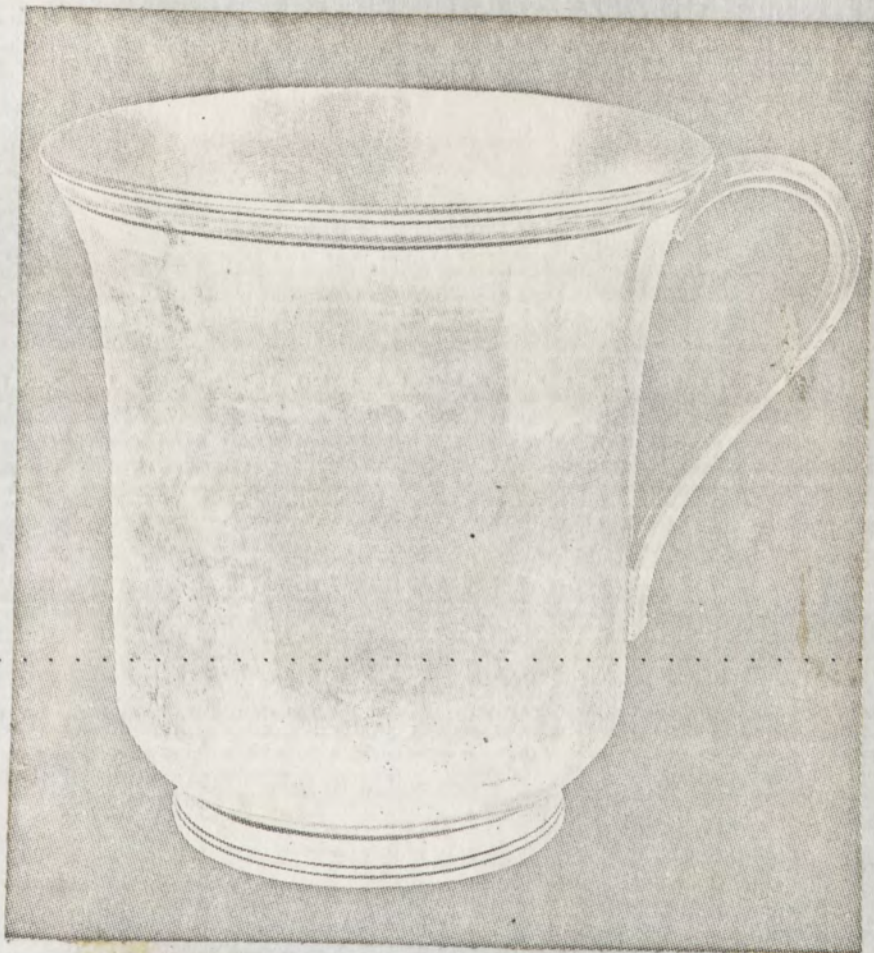


Figure 27. MUG

ranch brand, are amateurishly hand engraved inside the rim on the bottom.

Diameter (top)----4" (10.2 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-2 1/2" (6.4 cm)
Height-----4 3/4" (12.1 cm)
Weight-----14 oz.
Marks-----As described.

MUG

(Figure 28)

This mug is stylistically very like one of the matched pairs in the collection (Figure 25, b), except that this one is larger and has a different design on the handle. Soldering where handle has been attached is rough.

Three seemingly different sets of identification marks have been scratched on the piece: a crude "F" and a "G" on the bottom, and a barely visible "Trinidad C. de Baca" (not illustrated) on the side. A Luis María Cabeza de Baca who lived in 1803 is mentioned by Fray Angélico Chávez.³¹ He was married three times. According to Twitchell, Juan Antonio Cabeza de Baca, second son of Luis María, had a son named Trinidad.³² If this is the Trinidad who inscribed his name on this piece, it would have been in about the middle of the nineteenth century.

However, the Cabeza de Baca family is a large one and, according to the same reference by Chávez, are the descendants of Cristóbal Baca, who came in to New Mexico with the Oñate colony in 1598. Given names are often repeated in families, so there were probably a number of "Trinidads" born to the de Baca family between the late

³¹ Fray Angélico Chávez, Origins of New Mexico Families, p. 152

³² Ralph Emerson Twitchell, Archives of New Mexico, Vol. I, p.

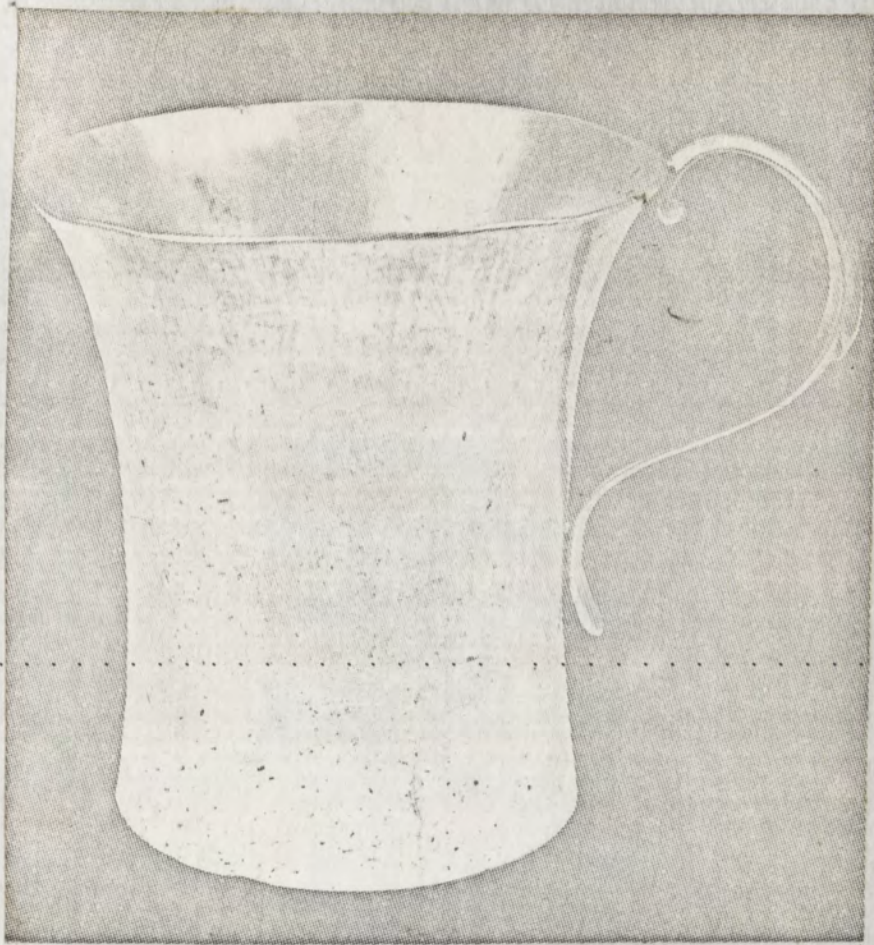


Figure 28. MUG

sixteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. So, finding this particular name in the records is more interesting than authoritative in so far as dating this piece is concerned.

Diameter (top)----3 7/8" (9.9 cm)
Diameter (bottom)-2 7/8" (7.3 cm)
Height-----4 1/4" (10.8 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Marks-----None

MUG

(Figure 29)

This is another piece which might justifiably be classified as "Spanish-American Provincial." In fact, there is a good possibility that it might have been made in ^{New} Mexico. Mrs. Fdeld's note on the back of photograph of it reads: "From Pino Family, Gallisteo, New Mexico."

It is marked on the bottom (as illustrated) with the name of this family which has lived in the Gallisteo area since as early as 1747.³³ One of its most illustrious members was Don Pedro Bautisto y Pino, delegate from New Mexico to parliament in Spain in 1813. When he returned from this European trip he brought back an English carriage in which he traveled the dusty roads of New Mexico, much to the delight of its provincial populace.³⁴ He may also have brought some silver for family use, of which this could be a piece.

It is most inconceivable, however, that a piece so simply styled and crudely made could have originated in Europe, or even Mexico City. It is far more credible to assume that one of the Pinos had it copied from an earlier beaker by one of his own Indian servants or local Spanish Colonial silversmith.

Here, the most noticeable characteristic is an over-

³³ Fray Angélico Chávez, Origins of New Mexico Families, p. 258

³⁴ Paul Horgan, The Great River, Vol. I, p. 420.

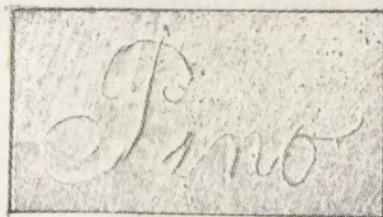
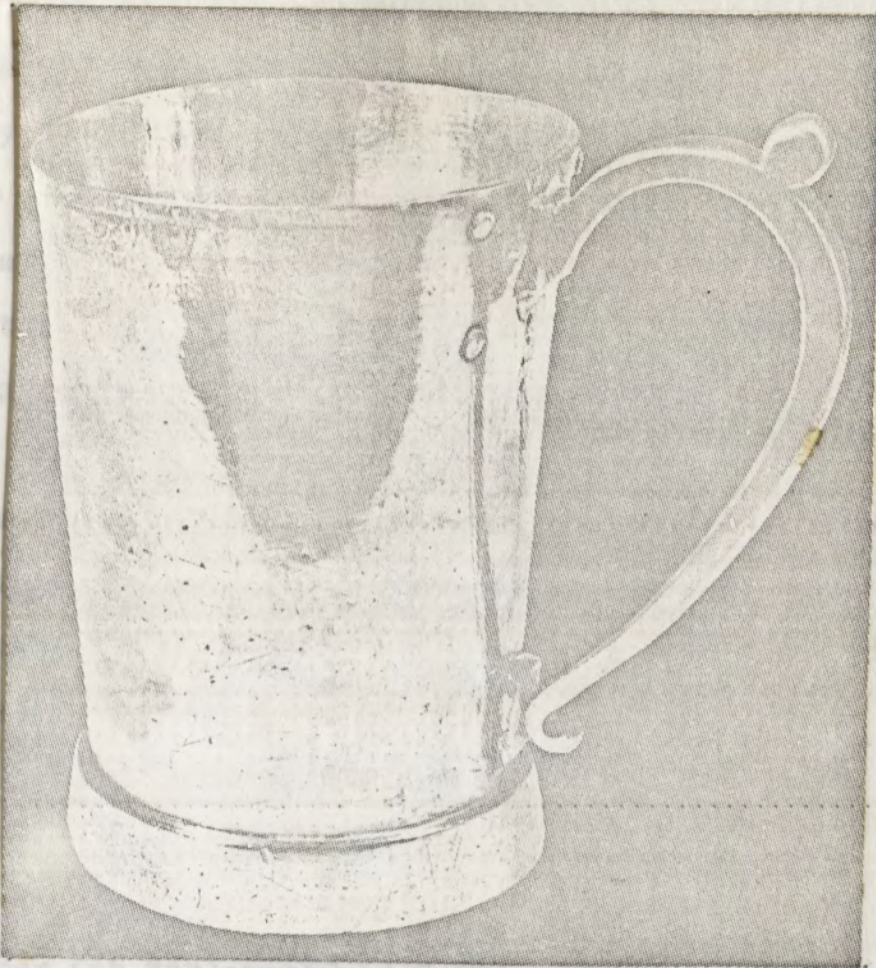


Figure 29. MUG

emphasis on functionalism. Its purpose was to serve the family as a drinking vessel, perhaps a communal one. In order to insure its durability, an extra plate of silver was carefully, and quite skillfully, bradded on the inside over the seam. Its over-large handle is heavily soldered, with an extra plate reinforcing the bottom. The beaker is quite small, but is set upon a base so heavy that it would be almost impossible to tip over. There is the possibility that it was originally a perfectly plain old beaker to which the inner plate, handle, and base were added at a time when it needed mending.

There is no way to estimate its age.

Diameter (at top)----3" (7.6 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-2 3/4" (7.0 cm)
Height-----4 1/4" (10.8 cm)
Weight-----14 oz.
Marks-----None

MUGS

(Figure 30, a)

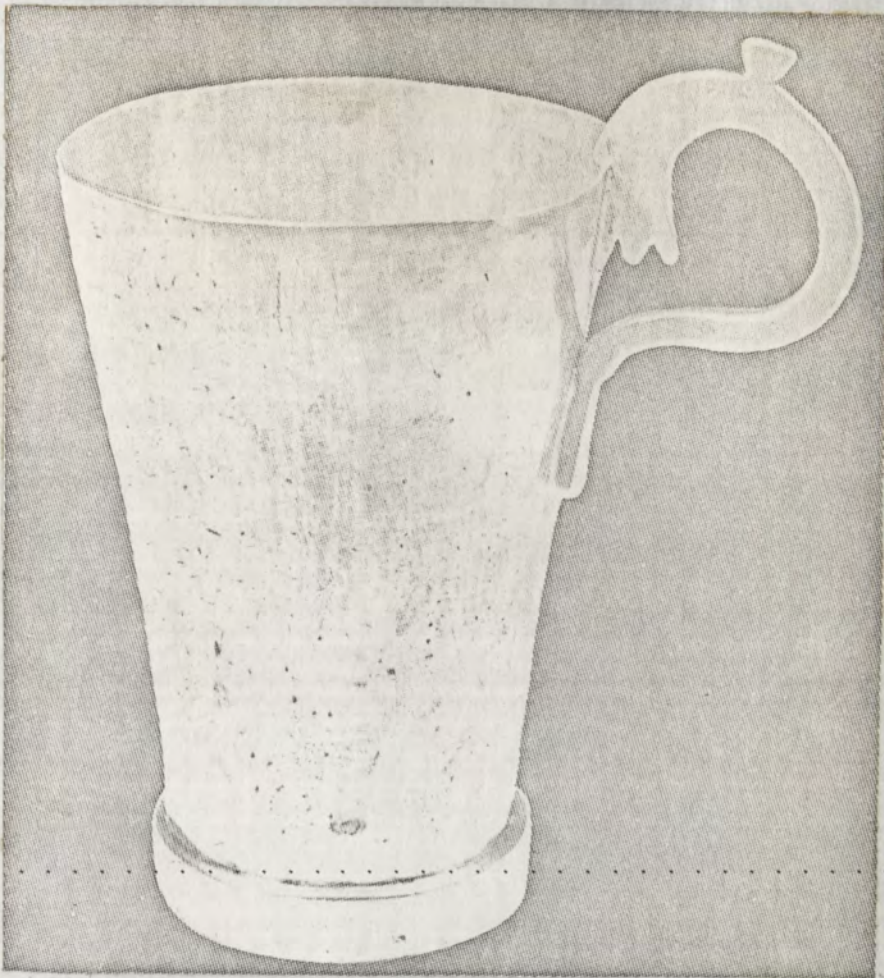
This small mug speaks more clearly of New Mexican provincialism in design than any other in the collection.

The basic form is that of a straight-sided ancient drinking horn. However, the handle, which appears to have been cut from a piece of sheet silver, has the geometric simplicity of an Indian "feather" design. It is placed near the top, where it tends to over-balance the piece visually. Actual weight balance is maintained by an unusually heavy base which is roughly soldered on the bottom.

The piece is skillfully crafted, and there is no indication that the handle, which is so short and cramped that it would be impossible to do more than hook one finger through it, was not put on at the time it was made. The impression here is rather that the piece was completely fashioned by a fairly skilled artisan who was attempting to execute a style which was not natural to him and the result was an almost awkward visual asymmetry (compare to Figure b. below).

A reasonable assumption is that it was made in New Mexico. There is no way to date it.

Diameter (at top)-----2 3/4" (7.0 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-2" (5.0 cm)
Height-----4 1/8" (10.5 cm)
Weight-----9 oz.
Marks-----None



a.



b.

Figure 30. MUGS

MUG

(Figure 30, b)

There is no distinguishing characteristics on this mug except that it is obviously one to which an eighteenth century cast handle has been attached. The rough soldering is very evident.

It is a perfectly plain, flared top, beaker design, almost exactly the same size and weight as those in one of the pairs (Figure 25, b). There is no way to judge its age, though it can be reasonably assumed that the original beaker is older than the handle.

Diameter (at top)----3 1/2" (8.9 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-2 7/8" (7.3 cm)
Height-----4" (10.2 cm)
Weight-----10 oz.
Marks-----None

MUG

(Figure 31)

This is another footed "tulip-shaped" mug similar to the one described earlier (Figure 27). As mentioned before, this was one of the most popular tumbler forms in Europe by mid-eighteenth century. During the early part of the century, highly involved Baroque and Rococo decorations were the style but after about 1760 the trend was toward classical simplicity. This style began to come into vogue in Mexico late in the century, under the influence of Manuel Tolsa and the Academy of San Carlos.

This piece has a low flared base, a narrow cyma border, and a gracefully arched cast handle. Solder is visible where the handle is attached to the vessel at the bottom. There is the remains of a gold wash on the inside.

The initials M. I. are die-stamped just under the rim. There are no official marks, so it is impossible to date except by style.

Diameter (at top)----3 5/8" (9.2 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-2 1/8" (5.4 cm)
Height-----4 1/2" (11.5 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Marks-----None.

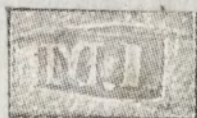
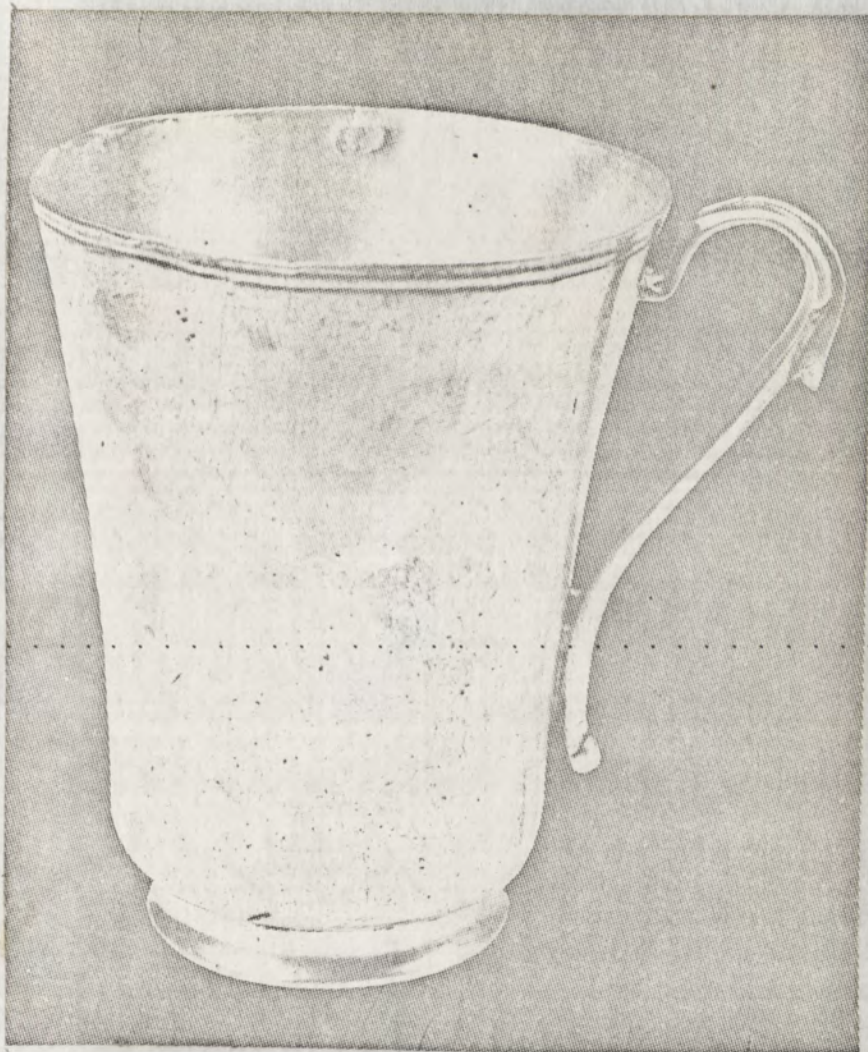


Figure 31. MUG

MUG

(Figure 32)

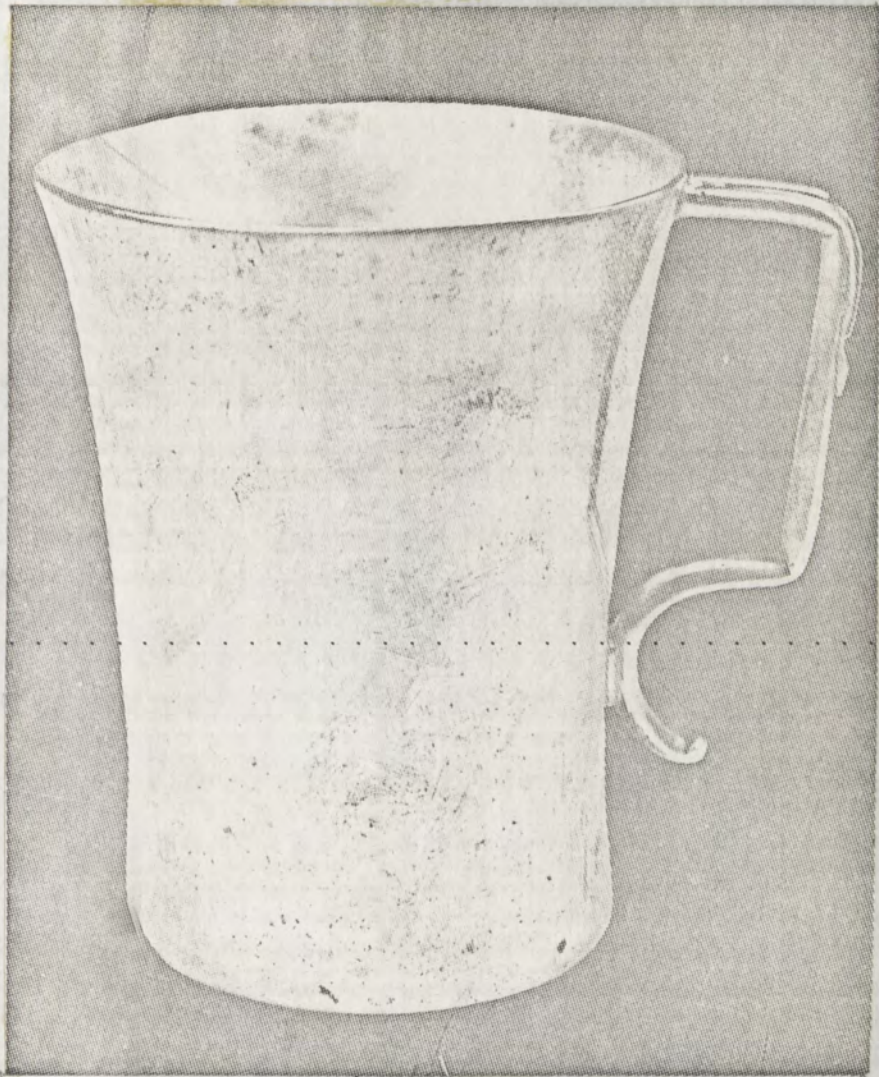
This is another of the perfectly plain horn-shaped beakers in the collection, to which a handle has evidently been attached.

In this case, the handle is not a typical eighteenth century design. It seems to have been formed by bending a rod of silver into the desired shape and then applying a simple decoration in relief. No reference has been found to handles of this particular type in the course of this study.

A monogram, "R. N." is hand engraved on the bottom. As has been mentioned, the initials are the same, and were probably done by the same person who marked the incense burner (Figure 10, b). The supposition is that both pieces belonged to the same individual at one time.

There are no official marks which might indicate the age or origin of this piece.

Diameter (at top)----3 5/8" (9.2 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-2 3/4" (7.0 cm)
Height-----4 1/2" (11.4 cm)
Weight-----13 oz.
Marks-----None



R. N.

Figure 32. MUG

MUG

(Figure 33, a and b)

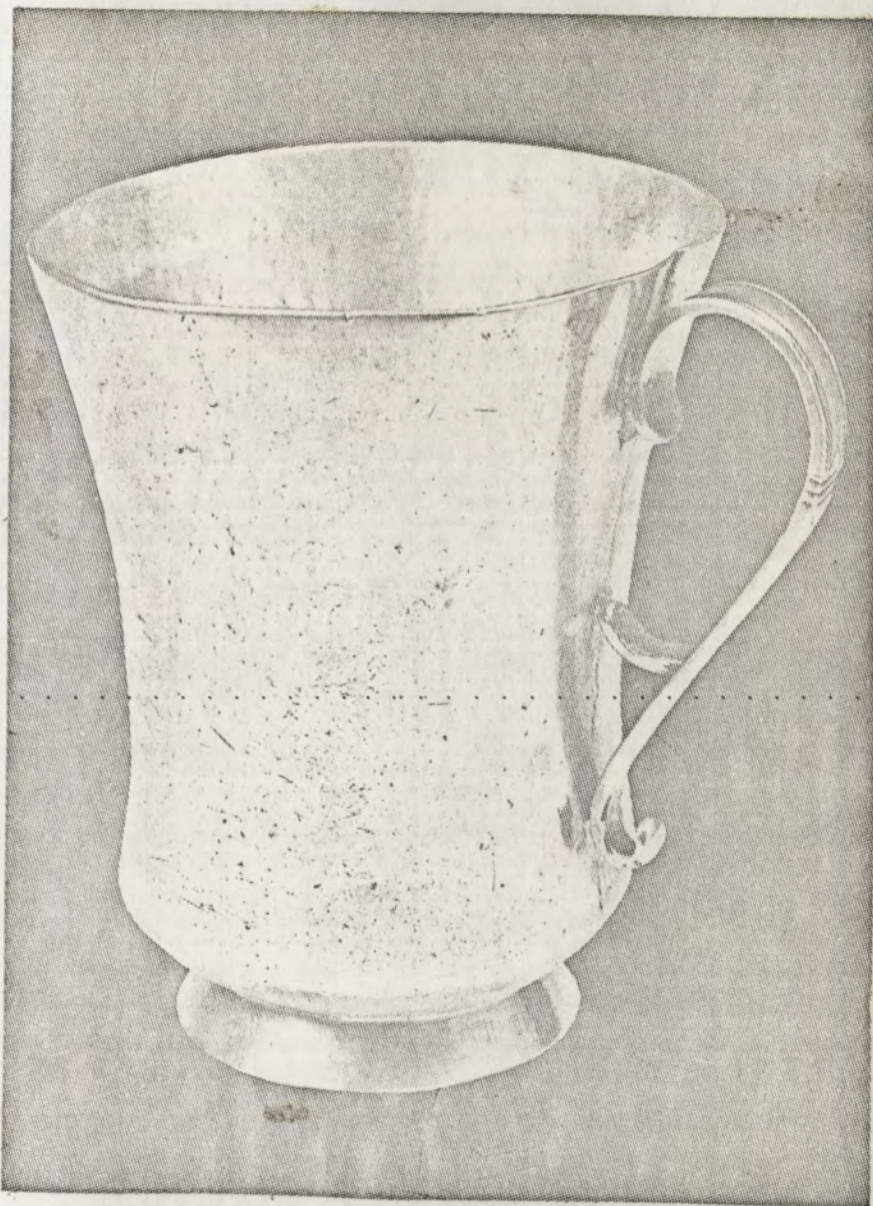
Tumblers, or beakers, varied very little throughout the eighteenth century, and the most popular form was tulip-shaped, with or without a foot. Therefore, it is impossible to judge, from the standpoint of style alone, whether or not this piece is eighteenth or early nineteenth century.

Only the handle has definite late-century stylistic elements. It conforms in shape to early eighteenth century design, but the decoration is Neo-Classic, with simple engraved parallel lines creating a "barely decorated" surface.³⁵ However, visible soldering indicates that the handle may have been attached to a plain tumbler at a date later than its manufacture.

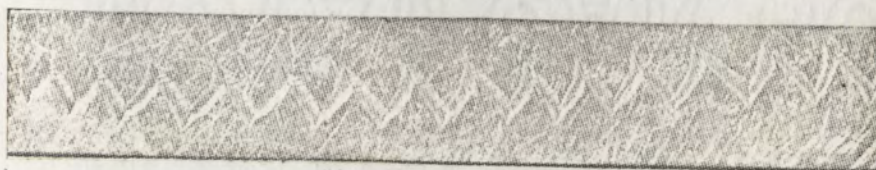
It is quite sophisticated, both in design and execution, so it was probably done in Mexico City or Puebla.

Two examples of buriladas are reproduced in this and the following Figure to illustrate the difference in designs achieved by the use of a burin. They were made by an assayer when he removed a portion of metal from the piece for testing. Evidently he was free to use his tool in any way he desired, for these marks vary greatly in design, size, and depth. Some of them are quite short and

³⁵ Stephane Faniel, French Art of the 18th Century, p. 100.



a. Mug



b. Example of burilada.

Figure 33. MUG

neat, others are great, sprawly marks which actually disfigure the pieces. Fortunately, they were placed on the bottoms. They cannot be used for purposes of identification, since their application was sporadic. They are, however, good corroborative evidence of Mexican manufacture.

This burilada does not appear on the piece mounted with it, nor does the one in Figure thirty four. Available space is used here to show two samples of the various styles found on the pieces in this collection. They are indicated, where present, under "marks" in the physical description of each piece.

Diameter (at top)----3 5/8" (9.2 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-2 1/4" (5.7 cm)
Height-----4 1/8" (10.5 cm)
Weight-----14 oz.
Marks-----None

MUG

(Figure 34, a and b)

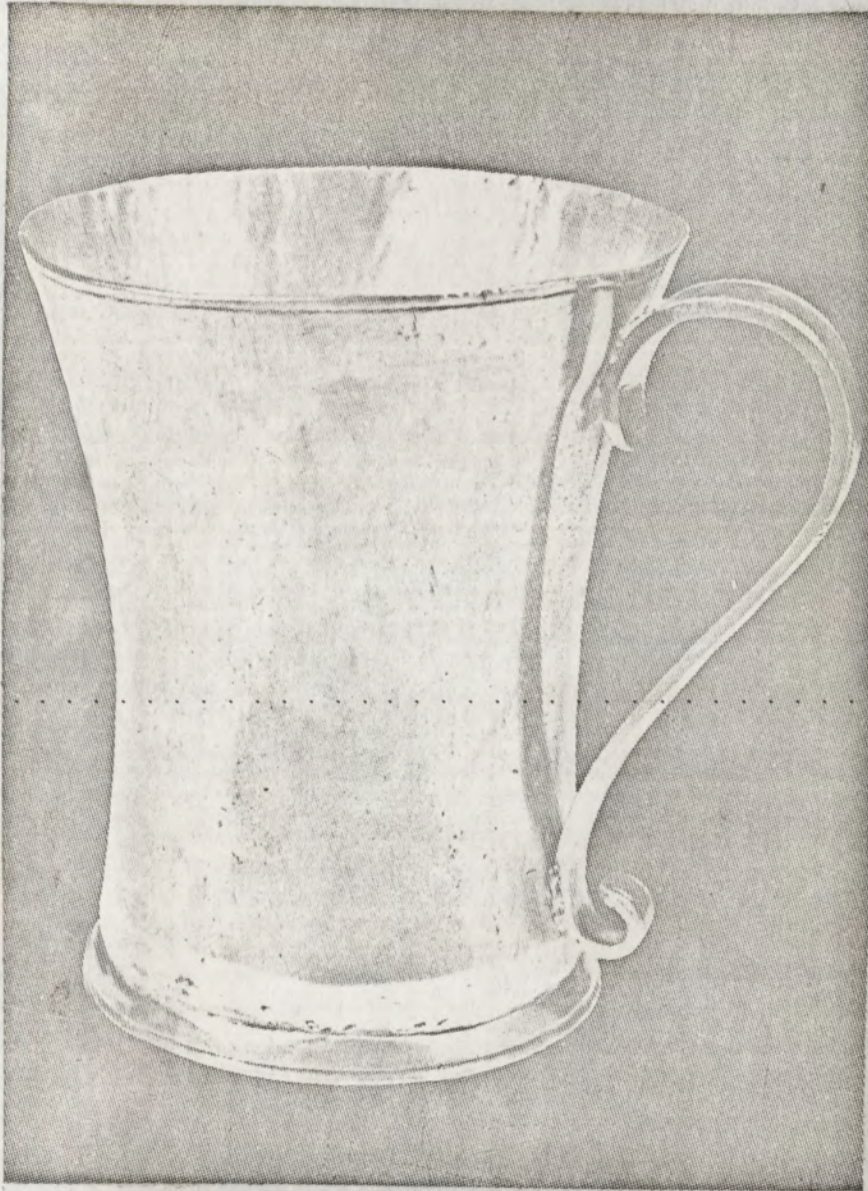
This is the largest mug in the collection, and quite possibly one of the oldest pieces. According to Mrs. Field's hand written note, it came from Don Soloman Lunas of Las Lunas, New Mexico.

The Lunas family has been prominent since earliest colonial times. Juan Gómez de Luna is noted by Chávez as being forty or fifty years old in 1631.³⁶ A Diego de Luna is listed as a member of the Conquistadora confraternity in 1689.³⁷ The family escaped to Paseo del Norte after the Pueblo Rebellion of 1680. After their return to the colony with de Vargas in 1692, they settled in the Rio Abajo where the town of Las Lunas stands to this day.

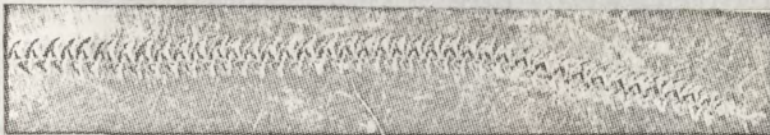
This could be a sixteenth or early seventeenth century piece, brought to New Mexico by one of the earliest Las Lunas. As we have noted, the flared drinking-horn shape was popular in Europe long before then. It has a shallow, lined base which continues the flare of the beaker below a short, slightly beveled area. The solder with which the large handle has been attached later is quite rough and obvious.

³⁶ Fray Angelico Chavez, Origins of New Mexico Families, p. 65.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 214.



a. Mug



b. Example of burilada.

Figure 34. MUG

Another indication of an early date is its excessive weight. It relates to that of the large, plain tankard mentioned in the de Vargas will, "two marks and six ounces" (Appendix II, p. 188). The Spanish marco (mark), figured from the table of equivalents published by Anderson (Appendix II, p. 190), weighed about 7.8 ozs. If the meaning of marco was the same then as now, the de Vargas tankard hefted at about one pound, four and a half ounces, a tremendously heavy drinking vessel. This one, however, is heavier. Its one pound, eleven ounces makes it by far the heaviest mug in the collection; the next lighter being the smaller but very similar beaker with a serpent handle shown in Figure 23.

The burilada mounted below is not on this piece. It is a stylistic example.

Diameter (at top)----4" (10.2 cm)
Diameter (at bottom)-3 7/16" (8.8 cm)
Height-----5 1/16" (12.9 cm)
Weight-----1 lb. 11 oz.
Marks-----None

TUMBLER

(Figure 35)

This is not a Spanish Colonial piece but it very properly belongs with a collection from this area since it quite possibly may have been brought into Mexico between 1864 and 1867 by someone connected with the court of Maximilian and Carlotta. The Museum of New Mexico in Santa Fe has an ornate pair of candlesticks stamped with the "M" and "CARLOTTA" of the royal pair.³⁸

A small tumbler, decorated in the Rococo style so beloved of the Germanic countries in the early eighteenth century, it is designed with five large coins set into the sides and bottom. These were identified by Mr. George C. Miles, Chief Curator of the American Numismatic Society. One is a "Two Mark" piece of Charles XII of Sweden, dated 1701, and four are "one-half Talers" of Frederick the Great of Prussia, dated 1750. The Swedish coin is set into the bottom with the dated side down. The initials "A.R." are also inscribed on the bottom with a series of small dots. The four German coins are inset into the sides of the tumbler, with the dated sides in.

Circles formed by the coins are extended into fanciful shell and floral medallions embossed in rather high

38

Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 10. 60-3-a-b and aa-bb.

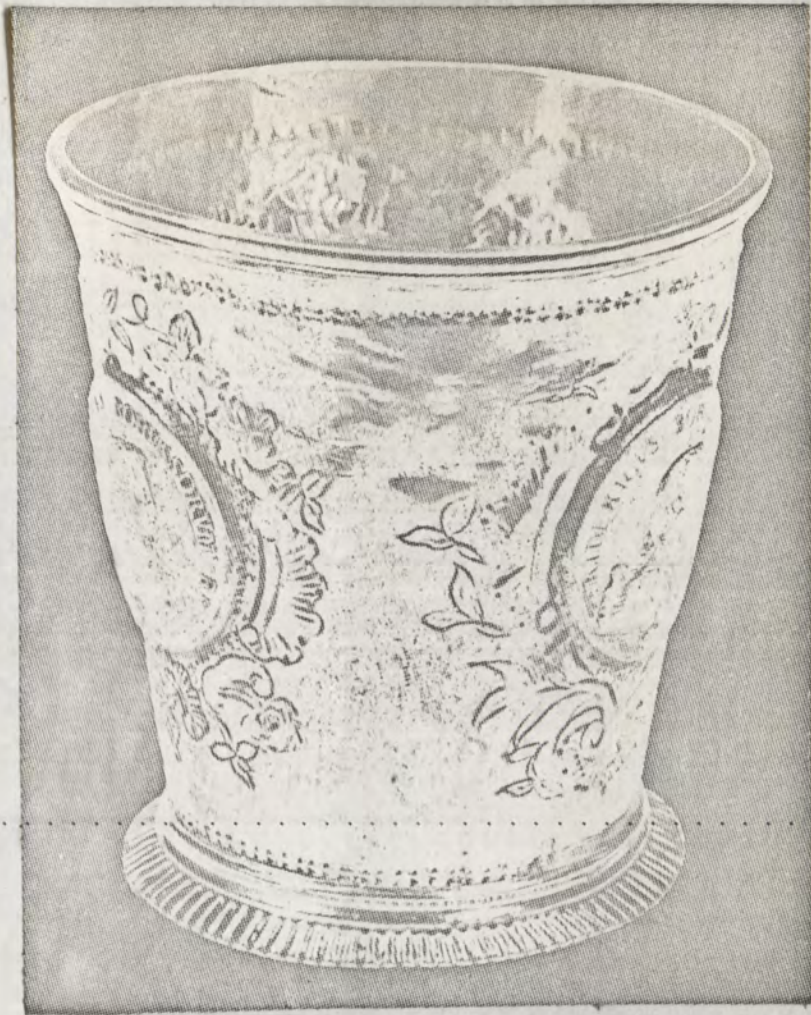


Figure 35. TUMBLER

relief. A delicate border, composed of leaf motifs, circles the cup above a cyma border and delicate fluted foot. There are no official marks, so firm dating is impossible, but it cannot have been made before 1750, the date of the German coins.

Diameter (at top)----3" (7.6 cm)
Diameter (base)-----2 5/8" (6.7 cm)
Height-----3 3/16" (8.1 cm)
Weight-----5 oz.

STEMMED GOBLET

(Figure 36)

This is the only goblet in the collection. The form grew in popularity in England and other countries on the continent during the seventeenth century, replacing the earlier beaker.³⁹ They are still made in silver as the most popular style for presentation cups. However, most modern goblets for dinner use are made of crystal.

This one is rather crudely made; lacking the grace and balance of most stemmed goblets. Hammer marks mar the surface on the inside, and inexpert craftsmanship is evident in the tooling of the base. The seam, which joins the sheet of metal from which the cup is formed, is clearly visible.

Perfectly plain, without marks of any kind, it could have been made any place. The highest probability is that it was made no earlier than the early eighteenth century, for it would probably take that long for the form to come into vogue in the colonies.

Diameter (top)----2 7/8" (7.3 cm)
Diameter (base)---2" (5.0 cm)
Height-----5 5/16" (13.5 cm)
Weight-----11 oz.
Marks-----None

³⁹ Seymour B. Wyler, The Book of Old Silver, p. 49.

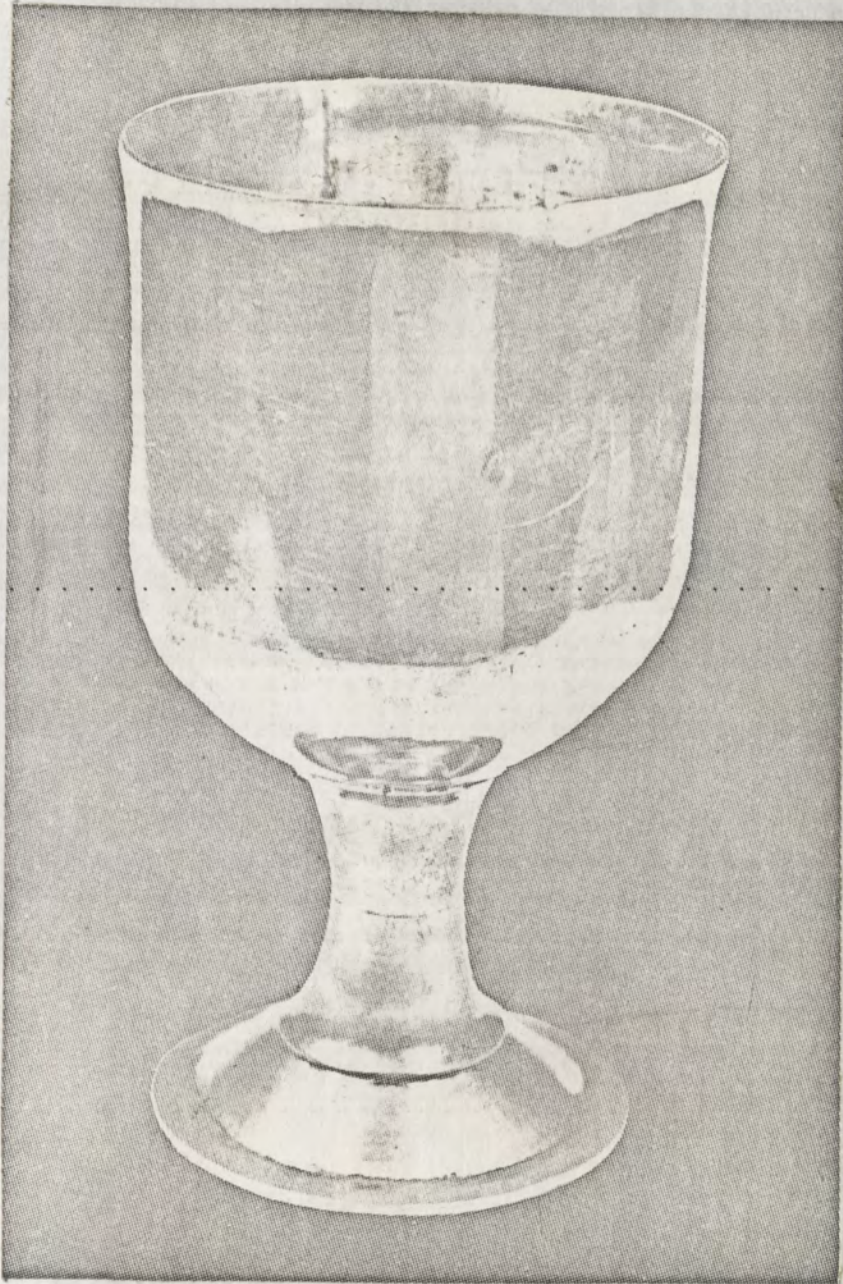


Figure 36. STEMMED GOBLET

LARGE FORK AND SPOON

(Figure 37)

It was not until the reign of Louis XV (1715-1774) that the term "cutlery" came to mean what it does today, an inclusive term which includes all of the service pieces needed to set a table. It was also in this period that table silver developed shapes, proportions, and sizes which we know today.⁴⁰

Knives and spoons are known to have existed since earliest times, but forks were not in general use until the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Earliest forks had two prongs. The three-pronged style was introduced in the seventeenth century and the style used today, with four prongs, was in common use in Europe by the eighteenth century. However, the number of prongs is not a dependable method of dating, except in a general way, because there was much overlapping of styles in different countries.⁴¹ Also, three-tine forks are still being made, particularly in service forks of different types.

These two large plain service pieces are near enough to modern proportions and style to make it unlikely that

⁴⁰ Stéphane Faniel, French Art of the 18th Century, p. 92.

⁴¹ Seymour B. Wyler, The Book of Old Silver, pp. 74-76.

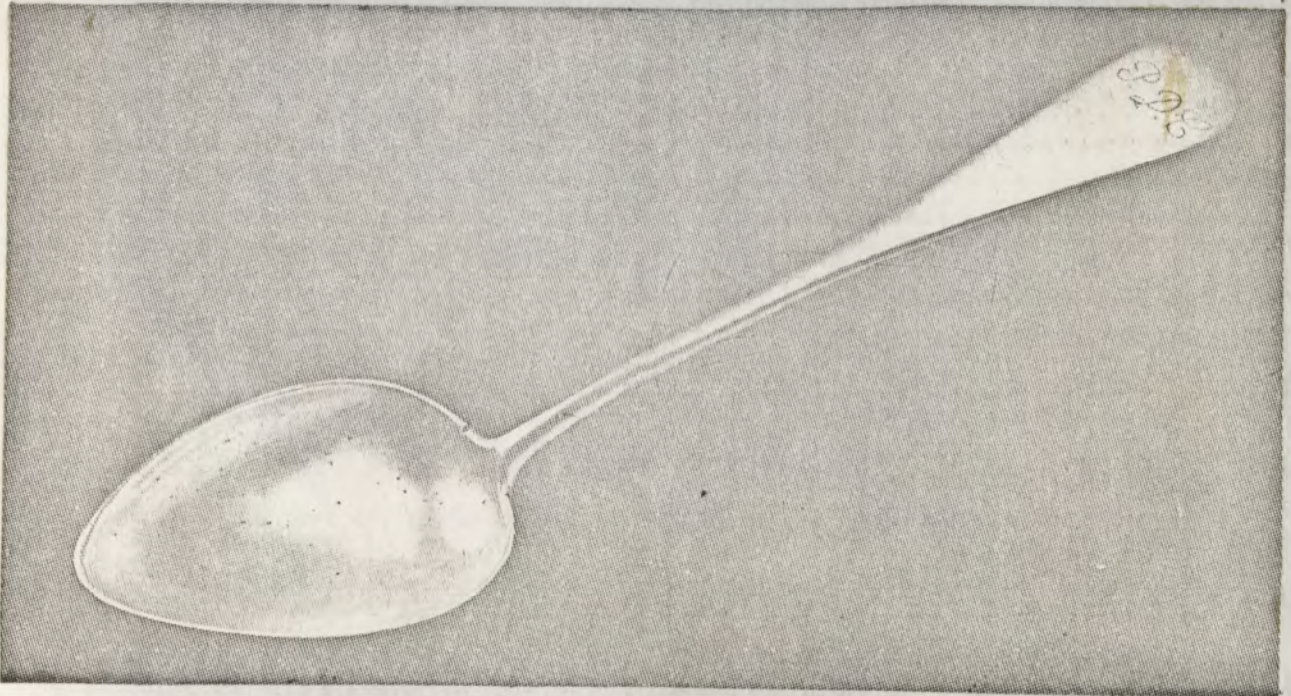


Figure 37. LARGE FORK AND SPOON

they are earlier than eighteenth century. The meat fork has sharply squared spaces between the three tines and the handle is chiseled into two shallow planes which form a ridge down its length.

The spoon has an egg-shaped bowl which seems to be a little heavy in relationship to the slender-stemmed, rather flat handle. The initials "P.D.C." are professionally engraved on the handle of the spoon. There are no other distinguishing marks on either piece.

SPOON

Length----12 1/8" (30.9 cm)

Weight----5 oz.

Marks-----None

FORK

Length----13 1/8" (33.4 cm)

Weight----6 3/4 oz.

Marks-----None

FORKS AND SPOONS

(Figures 38 and 39)

There are no knives in the Field Collection, only ten forks and ten spoons. Of these, six forks and three spoons are matched (Figure 38). The rest, four forks and seven spoons, are all undecorated but are in a variety of shapes. All of the forks are four-pronged except one.

Eleven of the twenty pieces, (six forks and five spoons), bear nineteenth century Mexican marks as illustrated in group A. Five pieces are stamped with these marks of Chief Assayer Cayetano Buitrón, 1823-43, and master silversmith José María Martínez. The set of marks on the right in group A is genuine (Appendix I, Figure 55, 6). The one on the left is forged (same Figure, 16-A). Buitrón's genuine tax stamp was a flying eagle with head erect, looking to our right. The forged one here upside down, looks to our left.

Apparently both are genuine Martínez marks. Evidently this is one of the cases where a silversmith forged official marks. Of Martínez, who probably started to work prior to 1819, Anderson says: "Curiously, Martínez himself seems to have forged the punches of authorities to evade payment of taxes, because his genuine hall-mark is found with both genuine and false official marks."⁴²

⁴² Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 244.

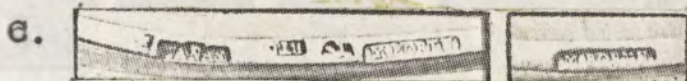
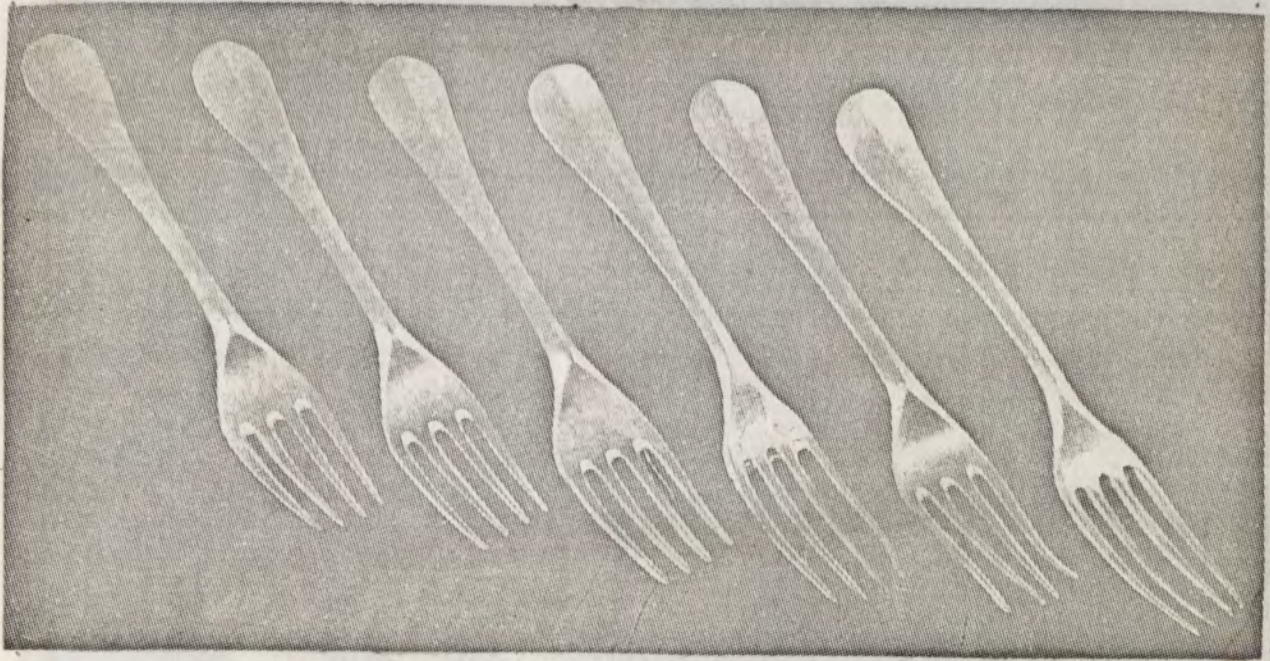


Figure 38. FORKS AND SPOONS

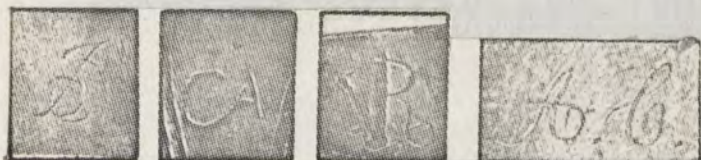
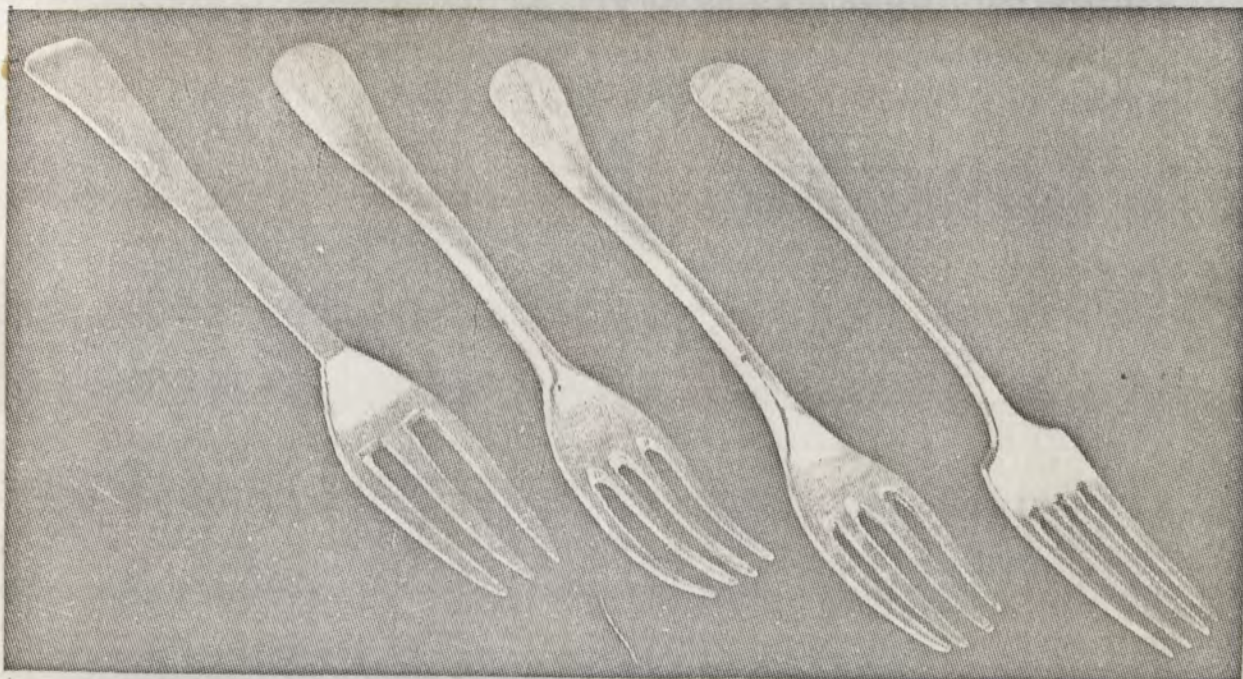


Figure 39. FORKS AND SPOONS

Another spoon is stamped with the same legal Buitrón mark as above but without a silversmith's mark, shown in group A. Three pieces carry two artisan's marks "CAÑAS" and "M PORTU," group C. These two silversmiths are listed as working in Mexico City early in the nineteenth century. Alejandro Antonio de Cañas was licensed in 1786 and elected veedor in 1794 and 1804. Manuel Portugués was licensed in 1811.⁴³ However, the presence of both names on these pieces, along with a fragmentary Buitrón punch and a forged tax stamp (eagle looking to the left), indicates that these are forged marks. Another piece has the same two marks without the silversmith's punches.

One spoon bears four punches, only one of which is legible (illustrated in group D). It is Buitrón's genuine tax mark as described above. One fork has the probable owner's mark "CHABES" stamped on the back of the handle, and four pieces are hand engraved with scratchy monograms as illustrated in Figure thirty nine. Nine pieces bear no official marks.

Evidently all of these pieces, with the exception of one, are nineteenth century. Those with Buitrón's genuine mark can be dated between 1823 and 1843. Those with his forged mark were stamped either during, or after, his period in office. Some of the unmarked ones might be late

⁴³ Lawrence Anderson, The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico 1519-1936, Vol. I, List, pp. 397-413.

eighteenth century but, because of their modern style and proportions, little earlier. The exception is the first fork shown in Figure thirty nine.

Here the style differs enough to indicate that it might be seventeenth century. The three prongs are suggestive. However, the most important stylistic elements are the flatness of handle and proportions. These suggest that it may have been manufactured before the fork was given its definitive form in the eighteenth century.

These pieces are all heavy and, to us, awkward. Some of the tines have been badly bent. There is considerable variation in the thickness and shape of the tines, indicating that some are earlier than others.

FORKS

Average length----7 5/8" (19.4 cm)

Average weight----3 1/2 oz.

SPOONS

Average length----7 3/8" (18.8 cm)

Average weight----3 1/2 oz.

Marks-----As described. (Scattered on both forks and spoons.)

FLUTED CANDLESTICKS

(Figure 40)

There are two pairs of fluted columnar candlesticks in the collection, alike except for height. They are a Neo-classic architectural design much favored on the continent in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

One of the taller pair has lost its outside fluted plates, so it gives the appearance of having a smooth base and column. However, inspection reveals small holes where the decorated plates were once attached. The taller pair is marked with doubtful marks of Chief Assayer Cayetano Buitrón, 1823-43 (Appendix I, Figure 55, 16 and 16-A).

The M crowned with an o in group A, is more like that declared a forgery by Mr. Anderson (reference above), but the tax mark (flying eagle with head upright looking to our right) is more like the one declared genuine. There is also a silversmith's mark in group A very like that of José María Martínez as shown in Figure thirty eight and the name "CHABES," an owner's mark.

The shorter pair is intact. It has the series of marks shown in groups B and C, none of which seem to have meaning. As noted before, the name "FORCADA," written in this form, is probably a forgery of the mark of Chief Assayer Antonio Forcada y la Plaza, 1791-1818, whose genuine mark is "FCDA." The other two punches shown in group B look like decorations, while the three in group C are all either

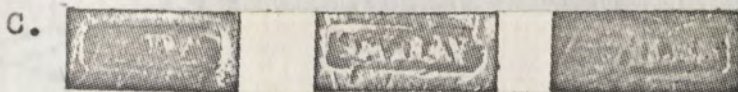
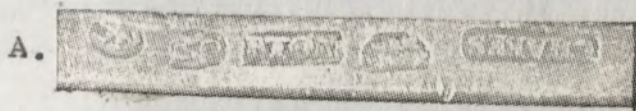
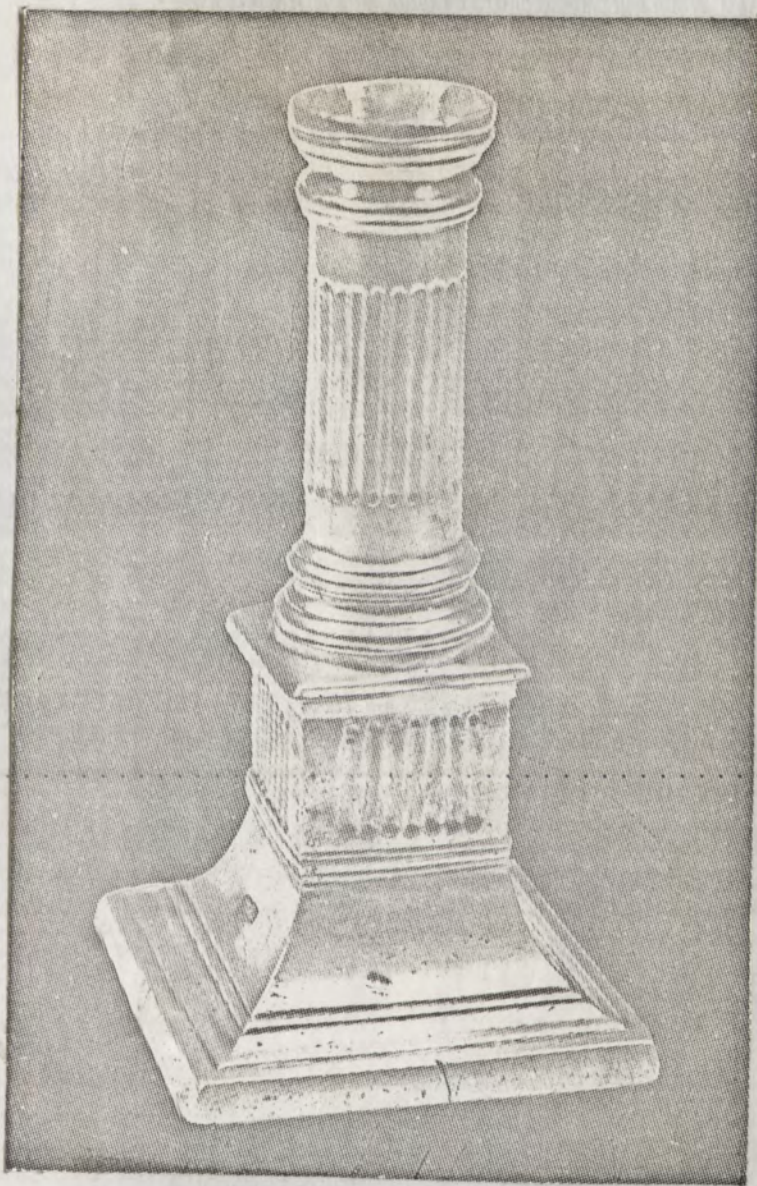


Figure 40. FLUTED CANDLESTICKS

silversmith's or owner's marks. Their haphazard placement on the two candlesticks indicate that they were stamped for the purpose of making them easier to sell.

TALL PAIR

Height----7 5/8" (19.4 cm)

Weight----1 lb. 6 oz.

Marks-----As described.

SHORT PAIR

Height----5 3/8" (13.7 cm)

Weight----15 oz.

Marks-----As described.

PEAR-SHAPED CANDLESTICKS

(Figure 41)

In common with many eighteenth century designs for gold and silver objects, these candlesticks derive their basic form from the ornamental elements of architecture. They have a pear-shaped stem incorporated into a baluster form, such as was favored in Europe, particularly in England, for stair and balcony railings.

Unlike many of their European prototypes, they are cast all in one piece, rather than being made in several pieces held together by a threaded steel rod and large silver wing nuts. Wenham notes, as a distinguishing characteristic, that they are not filled with any composition.⁴⁴ They have wide, gently flared bases and calyx sockets.

They are thirteen inches high and have no official marks which would make it possible to date them. Stylistically, they are eighteenth century. However, this is not much help in dating them, because the style is still popular and is being manufactured today.

⁴⁴

Edward Wenham, "Spanish American Silver in New Mexico," p. 33.

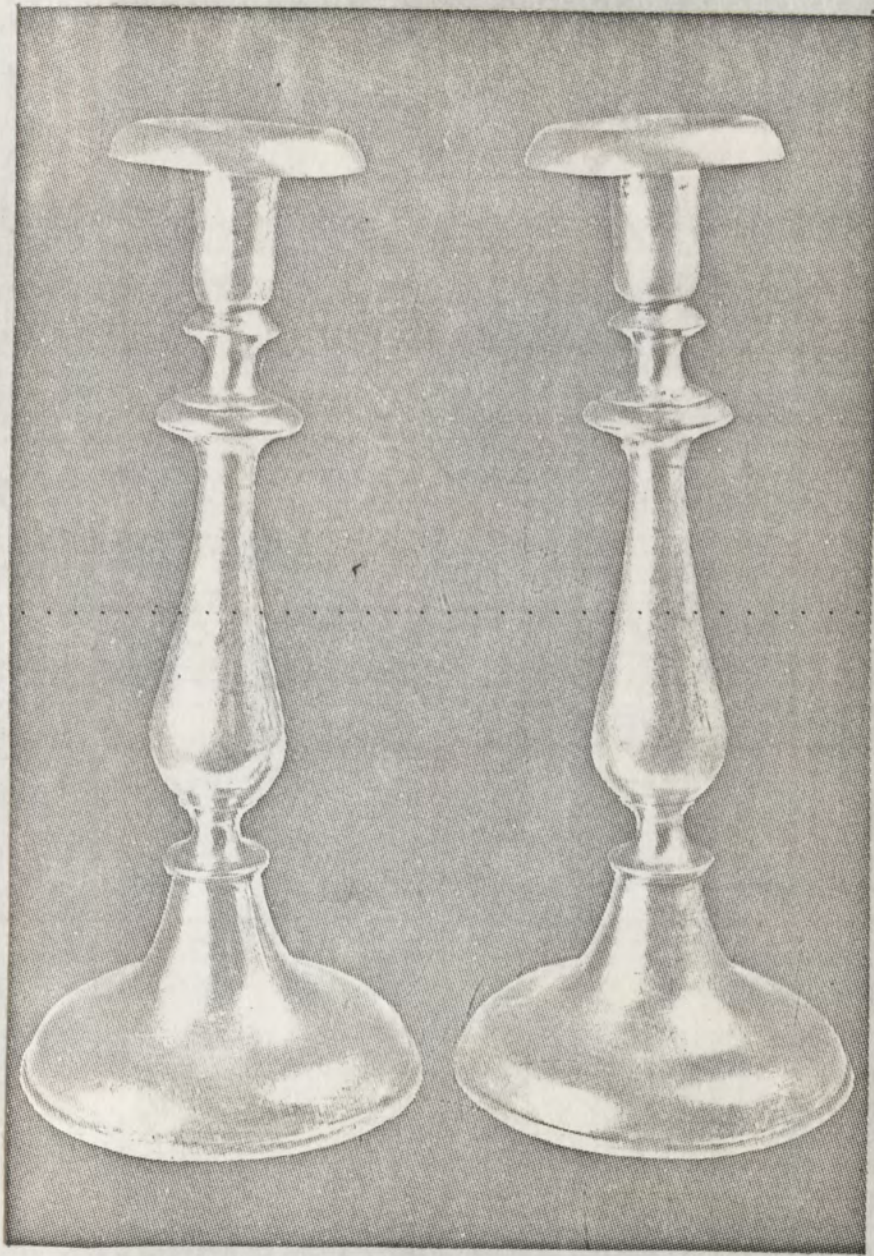


Figure 41. PEAR-SHAPED CANDLESTICKS

BALUSTER CANDLESTICK

(Figure 42)

There is only one candlestick of this design in the collection. Another variation of the baluster form, it is ten inches tall and made in two parts. The stem is fastened to the base by a threaded rod and wing nut. The wide base is circled by a broad, hollow-fluted, cyma border. The rather large (in proportion to over-all height) socket is tulip-shaped.

It bears the marks illustrated. These are unidentified. They are not Mexican, and so are probably European. However, it is impossible to hazard a date or origin for them from available references.

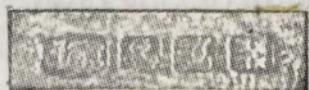


Figure 42. BALUSTER CANDLESTICK

TABAQUERAS

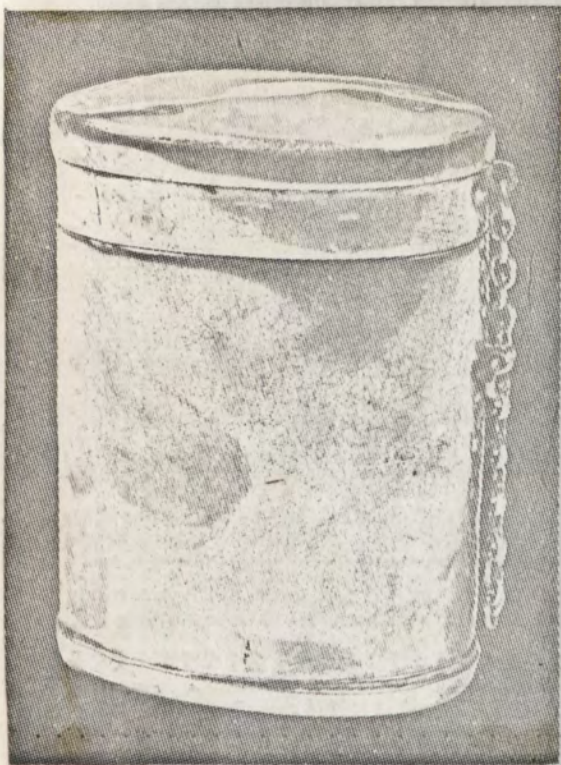
(Figure 43, a.)

The tabaquera is an object which may be peculiar to the Spanish American colonies. No mention of a piece like this has been found anywhere else in the reference material consulted in the course of this study. They were small tobacco boxes which the ladies carried looped to their belts by a small chain. With it they carried a little package of corn-husks in which they wrapped a locally grown tobacco called ponchi.

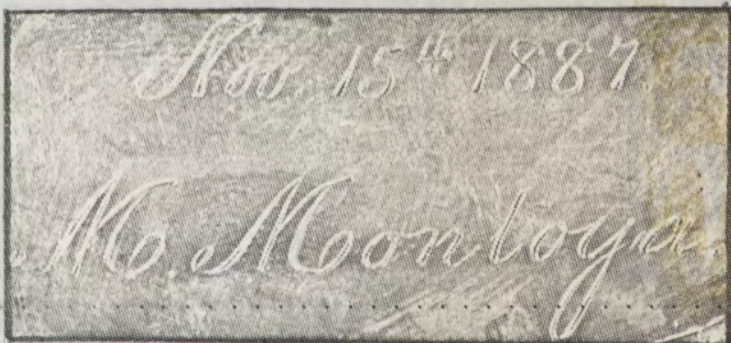
It was quite a shock to early Americans who came into New Mexico to find women, as well as men, smoking. An old illustration from the Narrative of the Texan Santa Fe Expedition by George Wilkins Kendall shows two Mexican girls standing in the deep doorway of an adobe house. The caption reads: "Many of the Santa Fe señoritas smoked "chupars," a thimble full of fine tobacco folded up in a bit of corn shuck."⁴⁵

This one is perfectly plain with the name "M. Montoya" and the date, Nov. 15, 1887, engraved on the bottom. The Montoya family is another which has been in New Mexico since the late sixteenth century. Juan Martinez de Montoya was one of Governor Onate's captains who served as the second governor of New Mexico in 1608.

⁴⁵ John E. Sunder (Ed.), Matt Field on the Santa Fe Trail, p. 2.



a.



b.

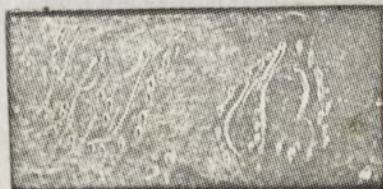


Figure 43. TABAQUERAS

A very similar tabaquera, in the Museum of New Mexico collection, is described as, "typical of country-made New Mexico silver in construction."⁴⁶ If there is a valid classification, "Spanish American Provincial," this piece would be a splendid example. Here we see all of the stylistic elements which have been related to those pieces previously analyzed.

Height----3" (7.6 cm)
Width-----2" (5.0 cm)
Weight----6 oz.
Marks-----None

(Figure 43, b.)

This smaller tabaquera may fall into the same classification. Though it is more skillfully fashioned and decorated, the design seems to have been applied with a tooling stamp, resulting in a pattern like those used to decorate both the leather and silver accoutrements of saddles in the Spanish-American southwest.

The initials "U. (or V.) B." are scratched on the bottom in a flowery script wreathed with gouged dots. A chain, which was originally attached by eyelets to the lid and box, is missing.

Height----2 1/4" (5.7cm)
Width-----1 1/2" (3.8 cm)
Weight----3 oz.
Marks-----None.

⁴⁶ Museum of New Mexico, Ledger, Acq. No. A. 62. 9-1/7.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

A study of the Mary Lester Field Collection reveals that all of the pieces in it, except three, are probably genuinely old silver and were made either in the Mexico City area or in one of the provinces of Mexico.

The three pieces which do not fit into this general classification are: a cup (Figure 22, a.), probably made in the United States in the late nineteenth century; a tumbler (Figure 35), mid-nineteenth century Austrian or German; and a candlestick (Figure 42) with unidentified marks which appear to be European.

Thirteen pieces are definitely dated and assigned to Mexico (except one) in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. They are: a ewer (Figure 3), either in 1861-62 or in 1867-68; a salver (Figure 7), inscribed with the date 1837; (firmly dated but cannot be assigned); bowl (Figure 9), between 1800 and 1818; four dinner plates (Figures 15 and 19), between 1791 and 1818; and six pieces of cutlery (Figures 38 and 39), between 1823 and 1843.

Thirty three pieces are stamped, but some of the marks are forged and others are doubtful, so they cannot be definitely dated. However, there is good evidence to support a probable date distribution as follows: two trays (Figures 4 and 5), late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries; a tray (like above) and nine dinner plates (Figures 14 and 19), eighteenth century; eight dinner plates

(Figures 16, 19, and 20) and four pieces of cutlery (Figures 38 and 39), late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries; two dinner plates (Figure 14), a cup (Figure 21,b), a mug (Figure 27) and two pairs of candlesticks (Figure 40), nineteenth century; and a butter plate (Figure 13,b), probably after 1895.

Fifteen pieces are unmarked, but possible dates are suggested on the basis of stylistic analysis, comparison, and historical background as follows: one dinner plate (Figure 19), sixteenth century; a mug (Figure 34) and a fork (Figure 39, 1st illustrated), seventeenth century; two pairs of mugs (Figure 25) and a pair of candlesticks (Figure 41), eighteenth century; a mug (Figure 33), late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries; and a compote (Figure 10, a.), an incense boat (Figure 10, b.), a cup (Figure 21, b.), and two mugs (Figures 27 and 33), nineteenth century.

There are twenty pieces of Mexican origin which cannot be dated because they have neither official marks or distinguishing stylistic characteristics. They are a small salver (Figure 5, b.), a footed compote (Figure 11), a cup (Figure 22, b.), five mugs (Figures 23, 26, 28, 32, and 30, b.), a tumbler (Figure 36), and eleven pieces of cutlery (Figures 37, 38, and 39). One of the mugs (Figure 23) has a serpent handle on which the date "1866" is inscribed. However, evidence indicates that this may apply to the handle only and that the beaker is of an

earlier, undetermined date.

This is true for several mugs in the collection. Thirteen of the sixteen mugs are the ancient "horn-shaped" style which was common during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe, but was superseded by the "tulip-shaped" style throughout the eighteenth century. However, the usual time lag, about fifty years, between the ascendancy of a style on the continent and in the colonies, indicates that they were probably still popular in Mexico until well into the eighteenth century. Visual evidence was convincing enough for eight of them to suggest possible dates. However, there is the possibility that some of these original beakers, for which no dating is possible, may be among the oldest pieces in the collection.

Three mugs (Figures 24, 29, and 30, a.) are among the eleven pieces which have been singled out for examination in relationship to the possibility of distinguishing a "Spanish-American Provincial" style. The others are: a large platter (Figure 5, a), a large basin (Figure 8, a) three small bowls (Figures 8, b., 12 and 13, a.), a dinner plate (Figure 18), and two tabaqueras (Figure 43).

The eleven pieces have been analyzed for consistency in exhibiting the following stylistic characteristics:

1. Obvious attempt to copy an established style.
2. Over-emphasis upon functional nature of piece.
3. Simple design, organically developed.
4. Little or no decoration. (Except in rare instances.)

5. Assymmetry.
6. Unusual feeling of weight.
7. Obvious exposure of method of construction.
8. Textured surfaces due to hammer and other tool marks.
9. Respect for material.
10. Obvious inaccuracies and lack of finish.
11. Absence of official marks.

All were found to possess the above characteristics to a more or less marked degree; resulting in a visual impact distinctly different from that of more sophisticated executions of the same styles done by artisans in urban centers. (Compare handled platter with lobed, hollow-molded cyma rim in Figure five to handled tray with lobed, hollow-molded rim in Figure six. Also, the large, flared, plain-edged, fluted bowl in Figure eight to the large, flared, plain-edged, fluted bowl in Figure nine; the lobed dinner plate with molded rim in Figure fifteen to the lobed dinner plate with molded rim in Figure eighteen.)

This classification, based upon the evidence of so few pieces would be premature. Yet the consistency of these characteristics is suggestive. They account, no doubt, for the assumption by Lieutenant Emory that the dishes from which he was served in 1847 were "solid New Mexican silver, clumsily worked in the country." Should future examination reveal a notable body of Spanish Colonial silver with consistent repetitions of these stylistic elements, a classification

of "Spanish-American Provincial" would seem to be justified.

The question of whether or not any of these pieces were made in New Mexico is one which cannot be answered definitely on the basis of existing evidence. There are several good reasons for believing that they may have been. Documentary evidence indicates that the three basic requirements for their production were present: people capable of doing the work, raw materials, and a demand for their products.

An attempt has been made throughout the course of this study to indicate areas of future study which might add to the knowledge and appreciation of the significant works of Spanish-Colonial art, an American colonial period which is being increasingly revealed as the source of a rich and meaningful cultural heritage.

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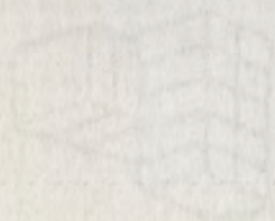
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APPENDIX I

Reproductions of pages from Lawrence Anderson's The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico, 1519-1936. Vol. I, showing both genuine and forged marks verified by him from 1524 to 1895. All comparisons in this study have been made in relationship to this material.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

AT OAKLAND

22. SUMMARY OF GENUINE MARKS STAMPED ON MEXICAN SILVER

1524-1936

Enlarged
REMARKS

MARK USED FOR
STANDARD (OF QUALITY)
AND OF THE TAX (20%)

PERIOD

NO.

1524-1578

1



It is possible, but not certain, that this mark is the one used prior to 1578. The mark is enlarged, its actual size being the following:



1579-1637

2



Although worn, which makes its reproduction difficult, the following mark is: the columns of Hercules crowned (adapted from the Spanish Arms), with an *M* between, which means 'Mexico.'

1638-1732

3



This mark is similar to the preceding one but smaller.

Figure 44. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER DIEGO GONZÁLEZ DE LA CUEVA
1733-1778

NO. DESCRIPTION MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER HALL-MARK (QUALITY) TAX MARK ENLARGED REMARKS

4	Genuine					
5	Genuine					
6	Genuine					

Figure 45. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER DIEGO GONZÁLEZ DE LA CUEVA
1733-1778

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	<i>Enlarged</i> REMARKS
6-D	Forgery				Forgery
6-E	Forgery				Forgery. From punches of Apolonio Guevara

Figure 46. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER DIEGO GONZÁLEZ DE LA CUEVA
1733-1778

Enlarged
REMARKS

TAX MARK

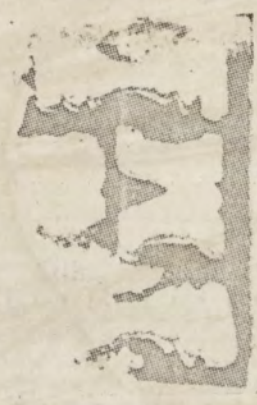
HALL-MARK
(QUALITY)

MARK OF THE
CHIEF ASSAYER

DESCRIPTION

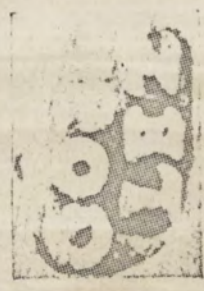
NO.

Forgery



6-A
Forgery

Forgery



6-B
Forgery

Forgery



6-C
Forgery

Figure 47. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

1779-88.

Enlarged
REMARKS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK
7	Genuine			
8	Genuine			
8-A	Forgery			
8-B	Forgery			

Figure 48. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER LIC. JOSÉ ANTONIO LINCE GONZÁLEZ

1779-1788

Enlarged



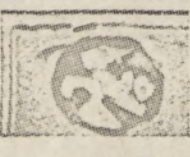
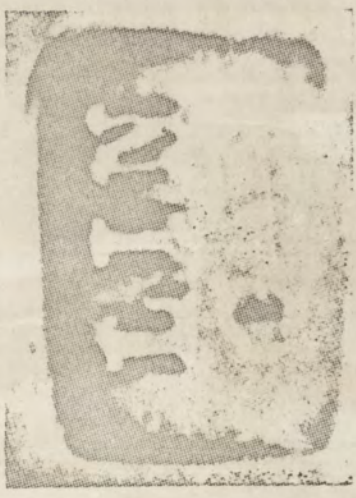

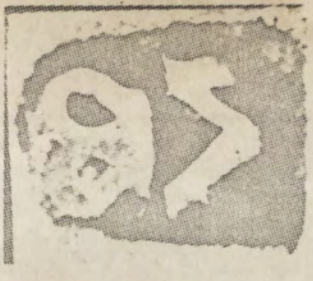
NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	REMARKS
S. E.	Forgery				From punches of Apolonio Guevara
S. E.	Forgery				

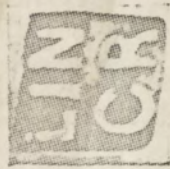
Figure 49. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER LIC. JOSÉ ANTONIO LINCE GONZÁLEZ
1779-1788

Enlarged

NO. DESCRIPTION MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER HALL-MARK (QUALITY) TAX MARK REMARKS

S C Forged



S D Forged

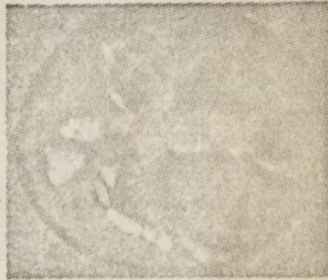
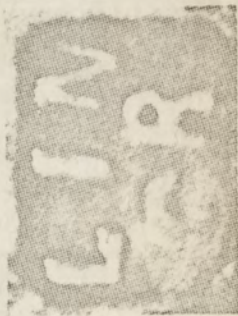


Figure 50. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS



Mark of the Chief Assayer (enlarged)



Hall-mark (enlarged)



Tax mark (enlarged)

Figure 51. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER ANTONIO FORCADA Y LA PLAZA
1791-1818

Enlarged

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	REMARKS
10	Genuine				Another type of crown used with the same marks: 
11	Genuine				Quite common
12	Genuine				Rare
13	Genuine				Rare

Figure 52. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER ANTONIO FORCADA Y LA PLAZA
1791-1818

Enlarged
REMARKS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK
14	Genuine			
14-A	Forgery			
14-B	Forgery			

Figure 53. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

FORGERIES OF MADRID'S MARKS

1819-1823

REMARKS

TAX MARK

HALL-MARK
(QUALITY)

MARK OF THE
CHIEF ASSAYER

Forgeries

Forgeries

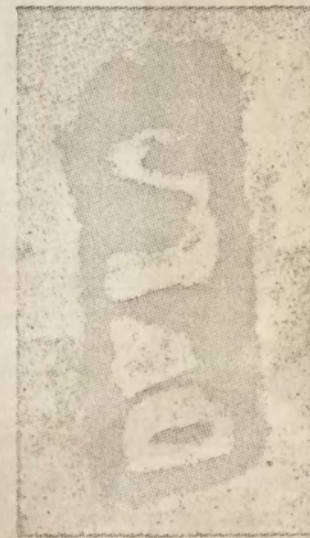
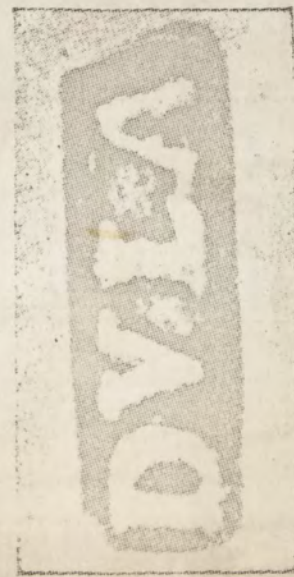
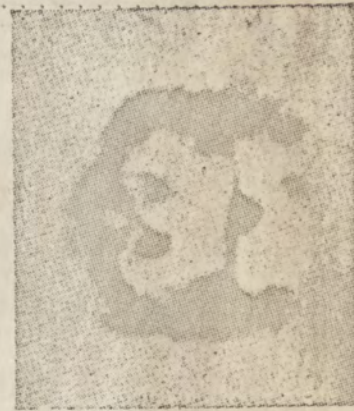
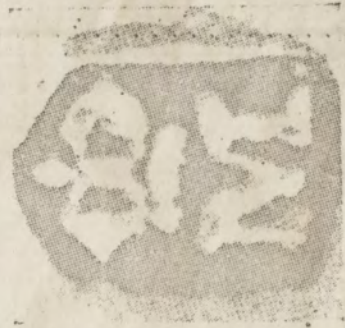


Figure 54. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	<i>Size Enlarged</i> REMARKS
16	Genuine				These are the only genuine marks of the period of Buitrón that I have found. This is, by far, the most common of all authentic marks found on Mexican plate.
16-A	Forgery				Forgery. Frequently found.
16-B	Forgery				The <i>M</i> with the small <i>o</i> above is an excellent forgery.
16-C	Forgery				Poor forgery. Quite common.
16-D	Forgery				Rare

Figure 55. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

GENUINE AND FORGED MARKS OF THE PERIOD OF CHIEF ASSAYER CAYETANO BUTRÓN

1823-1843

NO.	DESCRIPTION	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	<i>Size Enlarged</i> REMARKS
16-E	Forgery				With these same punches of 'Bton' and the 'Eagle' the following was also used:  Rare
16-F	Forgery				Very rare
16-G	Forgery				Forgery found in abundance.
16-H	Forgery				The forgery of the M crowned is remarkably well made.

Figure 56. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

SUMMARY OF THE GENUINE MARKS STAMPED ON MEXICAN PLATE

1524-1936

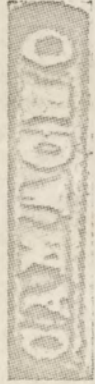
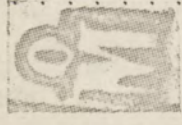
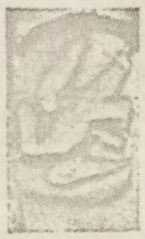
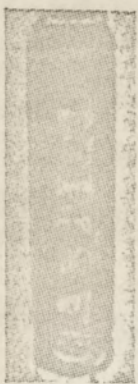


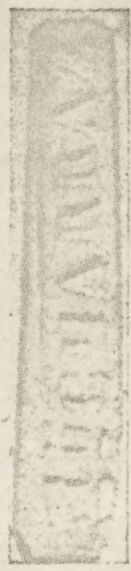

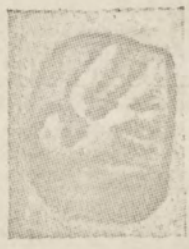
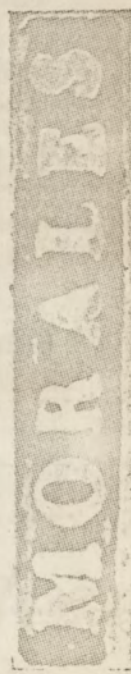
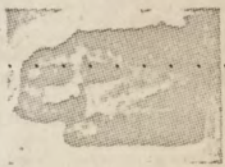
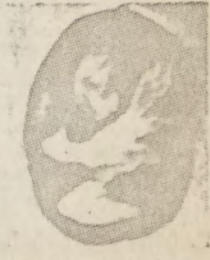
PERIOD	NO.	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	REMARKS
Of Chief Assayer Camacho	17				Enlarged No forgeries are found.
Of Chief Assayer Castillo	18				Castillo. No forgeries are found.
Of Chief Assayer Mucharraz	19				Mucharraz. No forgeries are found. The 'Eagle' used by Morales is from Buitrón's punch, which is still in use in the Mint in Mexico.
Of Chief Assayer Morales	20				I have not found Sáyago's mark. Chief Assayer Obregón told me that Sáyago used Morales' punches the M with a small o above it and the 'Eagle.'
Of Chief Assayer Sáyago	21				

Figure 57. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

SUMMARY OF THE GENUINE MARKS STAMPED ON MEXICAN PLATE
1524-1936

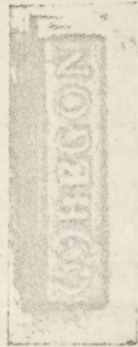


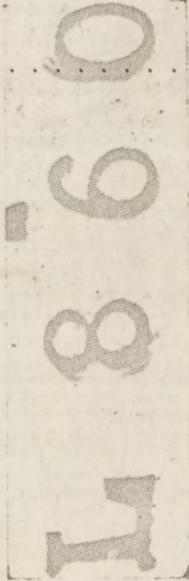

PERIOD	NO.	MARK OF THE CHIEF ASSAYER	HALL-MARK (QUALITY)	TAX MARK	REMARKS
1894-1895 Of Chief Assayer Obregón	22				<i>Enlarged</i>
1895-1936	23	Not Used			On the Hall-mark the <i>L</i> means 'Ley' (standard) and the number 860 indicates the pure silver content in thousandths of the piece assayed. The Eagle is from the same punch used by Chief Assayers Boitron, Morales, Sáyago and Obregón.

Figure 58. MEXICAN HALL-MARKS

Photographs of marks and punches found by Lawrence Anderson being used in silversmith's shops in Mexico City in the 1930's. Reproduced from The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico, 1519-1936. Vol. I.



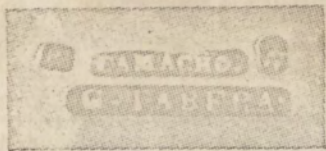
Enlarged marks from punches used by Carillo y Mendoza as decorations.

Marks from Apolonio Guevara's forged punches. Enlarged.

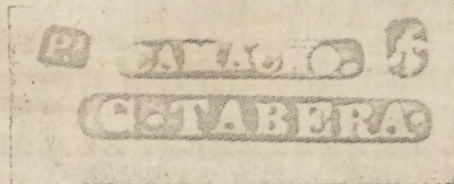


Marks from punches in the possession of the Silver Shop "Maciel." Enlarged.

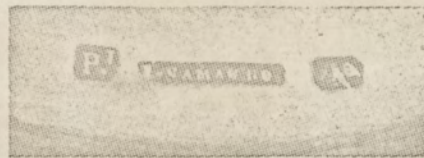
Figure 59. FORGERIES OF MEXICAN MARKS



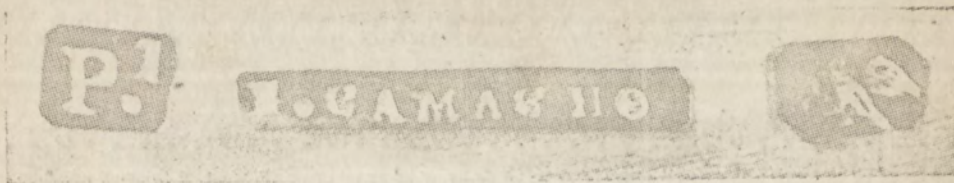
Actual Size



Enlarged



Actual Size



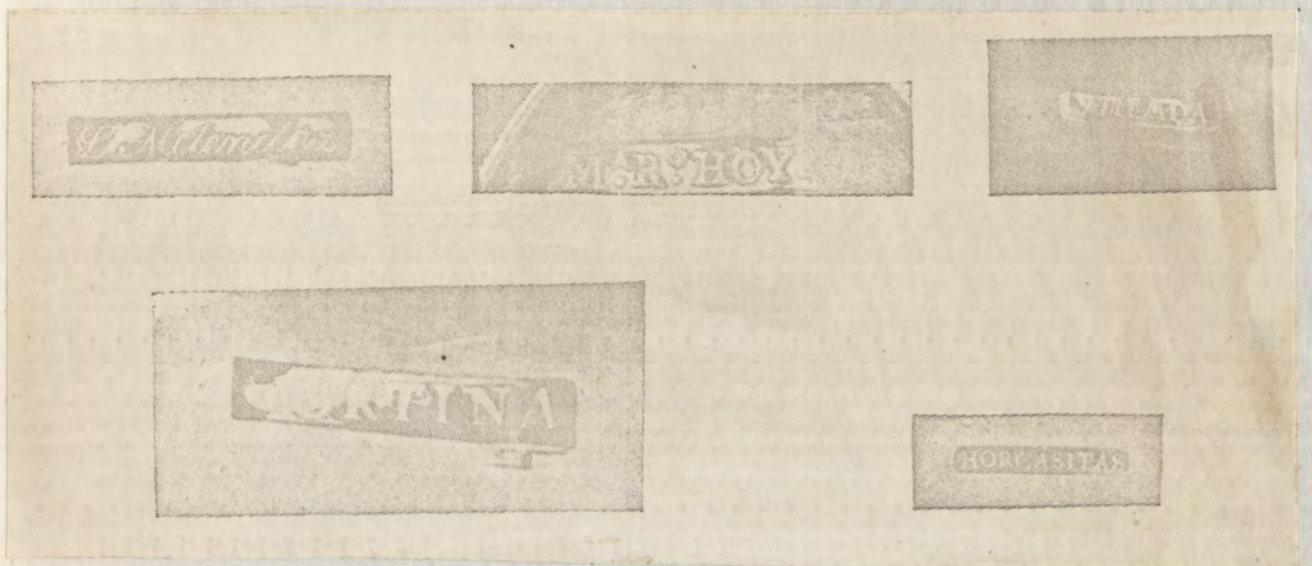
Enlarged

Hall-marks--San Luis Potosi



The 'R' Crowned:

Figure 60. MEXICAN MARKS



Typical examples of the individual owners' marks.



Hall-marks—Guatemala-Chiapas

Figure 61. MEXICAN MARKS

APPENDIX II

A. The following is a list of all items accepted by the University of New Mexico from the executors of the Mary Lester Field estate, as tabulated in the Field will:

- 21 volumes, limited edition, of William Shakespeare;
- 1 Robert Burns portfolio;
- Copper sugar shaker;
- Brass pestle & mortar;
- 1 Baumann wood block (gift of Mrs. Robert E. Dietz);
- 1 Copper pitcher;
- 1 Copper and brass pitcher;
- 2 Nichos (santos enclosed in tinware);
- 2 Candelabras;
- 1 Mahogany table;
- 1 Lamp - Mayan base;
- 4 Fiddle back chairs;
- 1 Opium bowl;
- 11 Old copper pestles;
- 1 Copper kettle with stand.

Collection of Spanish-Colonial silver, as follows:

9 forks; 8 spoons; 1 small spoon; 25 plates; 1 large deep platter--riveted handles; 1 large fluted bowl; 1 chalice; 2 small trays; 7 candlesticks; 1 brazier; 2 round service platters--handles; 1 large service fork; 1 large service spoon; 16 beakers; 4 tea (or coffee) cups; 1 bouillon cup; 2 snuff holders; 2 service bowls; 1 small covered dish--hinged covers; 1 oval dish and tray; 1 cup coin insets; 1 scalloped tray with legs; 1 pitcher; 1 large bowl (wash bowl); 1 butter plate.
1 large display sideboard for containing silver.

Collection of Santos (Spanish and Mexican) as follows:

1 Virgin Pura (surrounded by angels); 1 Trinity; 1 San Miguel; 1 St. with child; 1 Sonora Remedions; 1 St. Anthony (baby missing); 1 St. Anthony (with baby); 2 Guadalupes; 1 Rosewood Madonna; 1 Madre Dolorosa; 3 others; San Acacio; 4 crosses.

5 Chimayos
1 framed "marriage scarf."

B. The following is a complete text of that part of the De Vargas will which refers to the silver discussed in this

study as copied from a translation in Twitchells' Spanish Archives of New Mexico, Vol. I:

In the same manner my attorney and executor, the same being my Lieutenant-General, Don Juan Paez Hurtado, will remit or sell at the best obtainable prices the following silverware:

1st.: Thirty small silver dishes, the fifth part taken, and twenty-four sealed with my coat-of-arms and weighing more than two marks.

Two large dishes which weigh twelve marks and ounces.

Six candle-sticks, with my coat-of-arms, and two pairs of candle snuffers, which weigh forty-two marks, more or less.

Twelve silver porringers which weigh twelve ounces, sealed with my coat-of-arms, the one-fifth taken.

One silver bowl, gilded with a siren, weighing sixteen and seventeen marks, more or less.

One small silver keg, with stopper and chain, the one-fifth part taken, weighing six marks.

One large plain tankard, weighing two marks and six ounces.

Six silver forks and their silver tea-spoons, the fifth part taken and weighing twelve ounces.

Three silver table spoons, weighing about two ounces.

One large silver fountain, engraved, one-fifth part taken and weighing twenty-three marks.

Another small silver fountain, engraved with vine-leaves, the one fifth taken, weighing thirteen marks.

One silver deep bowl, for shaving purposes, the one-fifth taken and weighing twelve marks.

One large silver waiter, weighing fourteen ounces.

One silver basin, with my coat-of-arms, the one-fifth taken and weighing nine marks.

C. The following is a list of Veedores who served in Mexico City from 1527 to 1544, as compiled by Anderson in The Art of the Silversmith in Mexico, 1519-1936, Vol. I, p. 103:

Etor Mendez-----1527
Diego Martin
Francisco de Tolledo--1532

Pedro de Espina-----1533
 Bartolomé Ruys-----1536
 Antonio Hernandez
 Gonzalo Rodriguez----1537
 Luys Rodrigues
 Francisco Hernandez--1538
 Pedro Hernandez
 Gomez de Luque-----1542
 Gonzalo Gil
 Gabriel Billasana----1544

D. The following is a list of "Cajas "Reales" approved by his Majesty, the King of Spain in 1792. Copied from Anderson, Vol. I, p. 7:

1st. class: Mexico and Veracruz.
 2nd. class: Puebla, Guadalajara, Valladolid, San Luis Potosí, Durango, Zacatecas, Oaxaca, and Mérida de Yucatán.
 3rd. class: Bolaños, Zimapán, Pachuca, Acapulco, Chihauhau, el Rosario, Campeche, the disbursement office of Arizpe, and the "caja" of Cardonal. Later the disbursement office of Saltillo was established.

Following is a list of the Chief Assayers who served in Mexico City from 1731 to 1895, as compiled by Anderson.

Diego González de la Cueva-----1731-1778.
 Joseph Antonio Lince González-----1779-1788.
 Francisco Arace y Cobos-----1779-1790.
 Antonio Forcada y la Plaza-----1791-1813.
 Joaquín Dávila Madrid-----1819-1828.
 Cayento Buitron-----1823-1843.
 Sebastian Camacho-----1862-1867.
 Antonio del Castillo-----1867-1880.
 Mucharraz-----1868-1880.
 Morales-----1881-1889.
 Sayago-----1890-1893.
 Obregon-----1894-1895.

SILVER		TABLE OF EQUIVALENTS	
1 <i>Silver marco</i>	1 <i>Spanish ounce</i>	1 <i>Ochava</i>	1 <i>Tomine</i>
8 Spanish ounces	8 <i>ochavas</i>	8 <i>Tomines</i>	12 Spanish grains
4608 Spanish grains			
- 7.10548477 troy ounces -			
3278.3224 U.S. grains			

STANDARD FOR PLATE	
a. Pure silver was 12 <i>dineros</i> or one <i>dineral</i> .	
b. From the time of the discovery of the Indies until the 9th June 1728 the standard was 11 <i>dineros</i> and 4 grains.	
c. Until the end of the colonial period the standard was 11 <i>dineros</i> .	

Silver of 11 <i>dineros</i>	
93055555 of pure silver	
= 6.61204768236 troy ounces pure silver	
1 <i>Marco</i>	
1 Spanish ounce = .8265	

Silver of 11 <i>dineros</i>	
.9166-2/3 of pure silver	
= 6.51336104 troy ounces of pure silver	
1 <i>Marco</i>	
1 Spanish ounce = .8147 troy ounces of pure silver	

VALUES IN MODERN CURRENCY ²³	
1 <i>Spanish Ounce</i>	1 <i>Tomine</i>
1.318277	.0137320521
2.4828239	.02586274891
.369861417	1.003852723091
£0.1453	£0.00.17

SILVER OF 11 DINEROS 4 GRAINS	
1 <i>Spanish Ounce</i>	1 <i>Ochava</i>
10.54621605	.16235168
19.86259124	.305720883
2.958891338	.0455426416
£0.110.24	£0.0.2.03

SILVER OF 11 DINEROS	
1 <i>Spanish Ounce</i>	1 <i>Tomine</i>
10.38881086	.01352709733
19.56613656	.02547674025
2.914729065	.003795220133
£0.10.10.26	£0.0.0.17

VALUES IN MODERN CURRENCY ²⁴	
Mexican pesos	1.595
Spanish pesetas	3.004
U.S. Dollars	0.4475
Pounds sterling	£0.0.20

VALUES IN MODERN CURRENCY ²⁵	
Mexican pesos	1.595
Spanish pesetas	3.004
U.S. Dollars	0.4475
Pounds sterling	£0.0.20

Figure 62. TABLE OF EQUIVALENTS OF MEXICAN SILVER