

Argument to Re-Classify Colombian Philip III 8 Reales to Philip IV
Herman Blanton NI #LM115



8 Real 1622 M8-1 (R/L 1998)
(Actual size approximately 35 mm)

When published in 1998 the landmark book *Macuquinas de Colombia* placed much needed information into the hands of the cob collector. An English language second edition, *The Cob Coinage of Colombia*, followed in 2000, thus expanding the audience of the book. The authors, Dr. Jorge Restrepo and Mr. Joe Lasser, both deserve commendation for these fine volumes. Their books have stimulated research on Colombian cob coinage; and as a result our understanding of the subject is increasing, although there remain plenty of enigmas, and I suspect there are new discoveries still waiting.

A troublesome coin in numismatic catalogs is the Philip III Cartagena 8 reales 1622 RNA. It is cataloged as number M8-1 in *Macuquinas de Colombia* (1998) and *The Cob Coinage of Colombia* (2000), as number 112a in *Numismática Española* (1998) and as Colombia #3.2 in *Spain, Portugal and the New World* (2002) published by Krause-Mishler. The attribution is problematic because the assignment to Philip III seems to be based on one specimen only; fortunately it is illustrated in Restrepo and Lasser. The rarity of Colombian cobs permits us to draw inference from only small populations of coins, sometimes from only one piece, as in this case.

This coin was cataloged as Philip III because the king's ordinal is struck as III, this is apparent in the photograph. The difficulty with this attribution involves two points, the first is the coin has a strange appearance, and the second is that we *now* know of 8 reales coins of the same design, dated 1621, with ordinal of Philip IV. (Philip III died 31 March 1621, and the Spanish crown passed to Philip IV). There are 2 reales and 2 escudos of Philip III dated 1622, but these are distinctly different in design.

To confirm the ordinal we need to see the complete numeral. The legend on cob coins includes a "stop" between words (even between abbreviated words). For Example the obverse legend on a Philip IV coin is "•PHILIPPVS•III•D•G•"



Philip III 2R 1622
(Actual size approximately 25 mm)

For Philip III the ordinal should read •III• as shown in the illustration above, for Philip IV it should read •III•. On the subject coin the ordinal reads •III, which is insufficient data to confirm if the numeral is III or IIII, the missing data is replaced by the mint mark RN. The RN mint mark has moved toward the outside of the design. The character separation in PHILIPPVS also indicates an error. This error is from multiple strikes of the coin with the dies, or the obverse die itself had the RN in the wrong place.

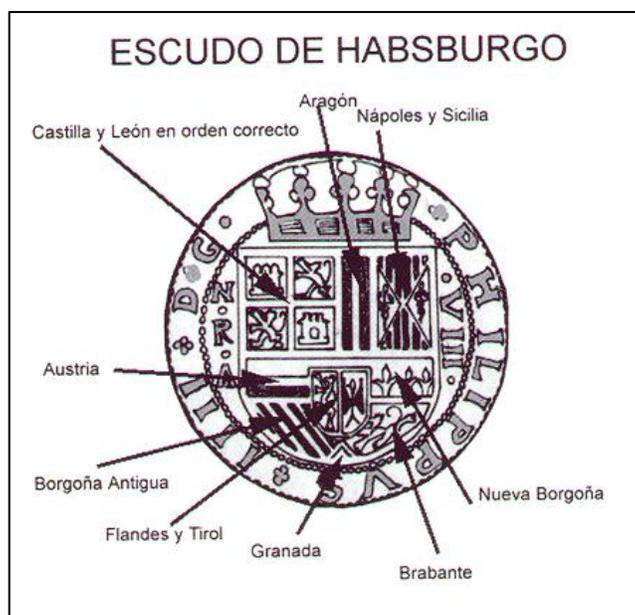


Diagram of "standard" Colombian 8 Reales Obverse, Philip IV
From R/L (1998)

The illustration above is for 8 reales coins issued beginning in 1632 (a different assayer, A), but serves to show the intended location of the mint mark. The mint mark "NR" is arranged vertically above the assayer "A" and located between the shield and

the peripheral legend. Notice that each word of text is separated by a stop of either a rosette or a dot (pearl?).

Below are diagrams illustrating how the RN mint mark of the subject coin is located in the area intended for the peripheral legend, thus overwriting part of the king's ordinal and the letter D. A close examination of an enlarged photograph of the coin shows no dot after III.



Correct Design



Error



Enlargement of M8-1

In conclusion, I suggest that the Philip III 8 reales type be removed from the coin census and be re-classified as Philip IV. Dr. Restrepo has already re-classified this coin as M41-1 (Philip IV) in his updated volume *Monedas de Colombia 1619-2006*. All images are courtesy of Dr. Jorge Restrepo.

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The Copper Revolt **Howard Ford NI #LM90**

In Russia, around the middle of the seventeenth century, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovitch, realizing that the economy of his huge country was in near chaos, proposed to replace silver kopecks with copper kopecks. Although Alexei seems to have been a rather good ruler and a decent man, the people were outraged by this attempt to take precious metal away from them and give them base metal in return. By 1662, when the tsar was making a concerted effort to introduce the copper coinage, public reaction turned very ugly. The vigorous protest against the new coinage is referred to as "The Copper Revolt." It would remain for one of Alexei's sons, Peter the Great, to achieve a successful reform of the Russian monetary system about forty years later.

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