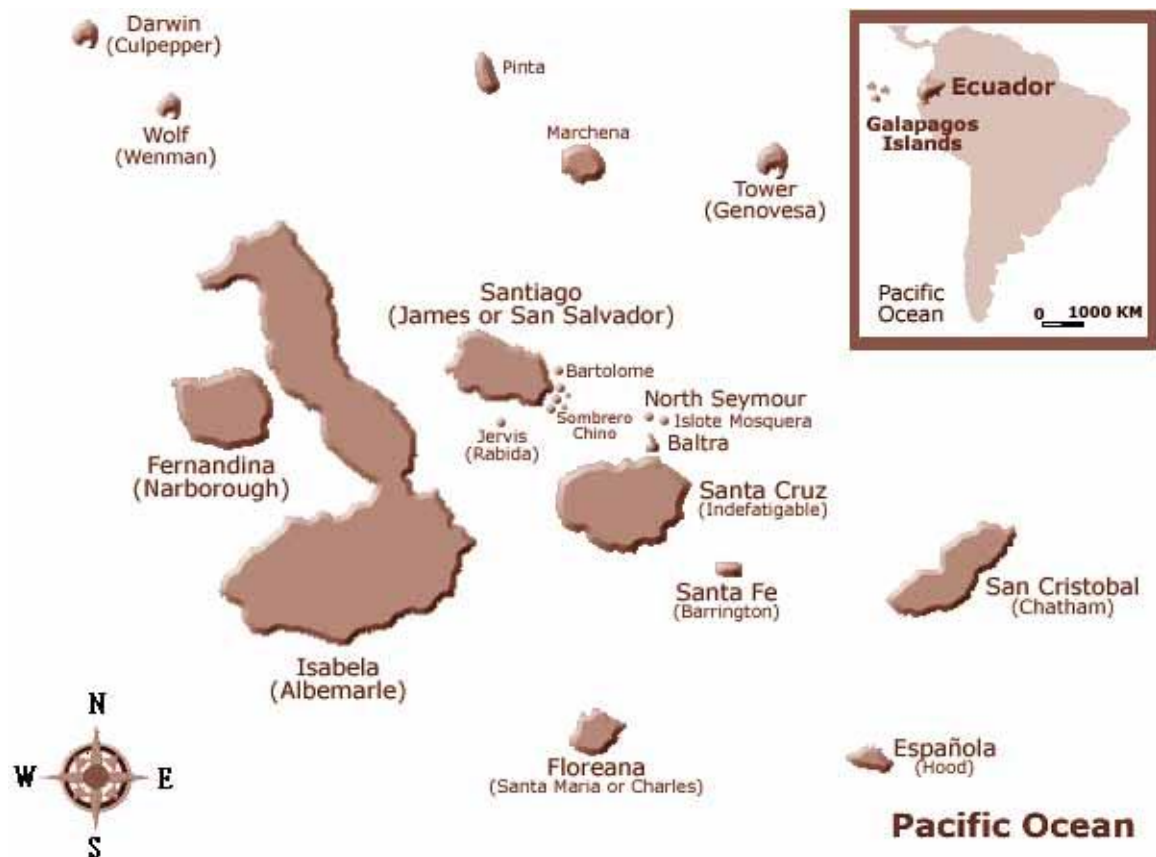


SCRIP & TOKENS OF MANUEL J. COBOS

Ingenio Progreso –Chatham Island, Galapagos, Ecuador



By Dale Seppa
September 4, 2015

As most readers are not familiar with the history of the entity known as Ingenio Progreso owned by Manuel Julian Cobos on San Cristobal island in the Galapagos. I will give a brief overview of his operation followed by the listings of the known scrip and tokens that he used prior to his death. There is a book (in Spanish) about Cobos by Octavio Latorre available on Amazon for those interested in this extremely interesting personage. "Charles Darwin Slept Here" by John Woram is in English (available on Amazon) and gives a great deal of information about the Galapagos for the unilingual speaker of English.



Cobos came to the Galapagos quite early and eventually had a fairly large operation mostly based on sugar refining but also earning money with other agricultural products, livestock and lime (calcium oxide which was exported and also used to whiten the sugar produced in the refinery). He was not known to be kind to his employees who were native-born islanders, convicts, some others shanghaied from various places and a few fugitives thrown in for good measure. The "money" that he used to pay the workers consisted of non-legal tokens and scrip redeemable only in his store at Progreso on Chatham (now San Cristobal).

After many years of alleged, egregious abuses a number of the workers revolted, killed Cobos on January 14, 1904, took control of a ship and left for the mainland.

Known Cabos Issues

(5 Centavos?) ND (Ca.1875?) Thick round leather and branded (probably with "MC" or "MJC").
Supposedly called "cobonas" according to an Ecuadorian biographical dictionary.



(5 Centavos) ND Lead ND but probably ca. 1875 - 85.

10 Centavos 1894 Red plastic. Hacienda La Carmen, Santa Cruz. See photo in LME.



20 Centavos ND Vulcanite or Bakelite, 22 mm. ANACARSIS MEDINA, Chanduy. Cobos had property in Chanduy so this might be why this token was included in Bognoly's book.



50 Centavos ND Scrip. This note was still in use in 1904.



80 (Centavos) ND Copper. Probably 1889 - 1904.

Known Cabos Issues



100 (Centavos) ND Copper



1 Sucre ND Scrip. I suspect this note was still in use in 1904 but have no proof of that.

5 Sucres ND Scrip. Reported by Latorre but there is no other confirmation in anything that I have seen.

Sizes are not exact for a number of reasons including the fact that I see no use giving would-be counterfeiters every last detail of these extremely rare note.

All of these listings came from LAS ISLAS ENCANTADAS 1905 edition by Bognoly. Strange that he did not list the 5 Sucres yet we have to remember that 5 Sucres a very large amount of money in that period, particularly in the Galapagos.



This is an excerpted section from *ECUADORIAN COINS - An Annotated Checklist* due to be published in 2016.

Prepared by: Dale Seppa
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