

A NUMISMATIC LEGACY FROM PORTUGAL'S 'WAR OF THE TWO BROTHERS'

John E. Sandrock

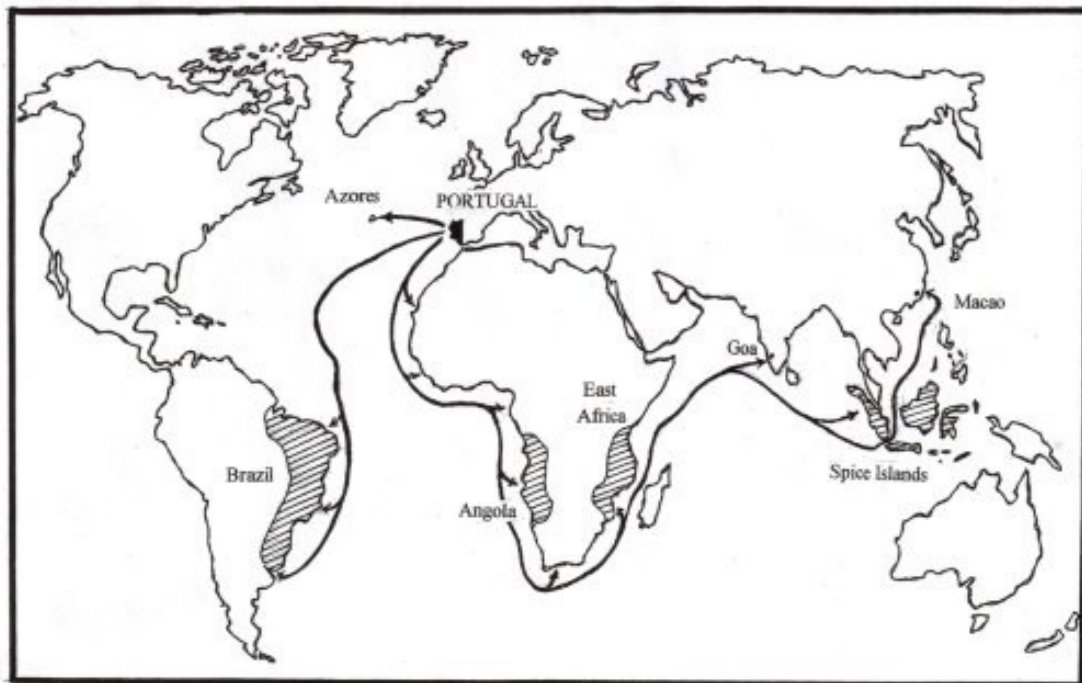
As an avid paper money enthusiast I have always been intrigued by the little mysteries that sometimes show up. Such a baffling puzzle surfaced some years ago after I had acquired a group of early Portuguese currency dating from the late 1700s. These notes had all been overprinted with red sunbursts bearing the name of the king of Portugal. The difficulty was, that some notes were attributed to Pedro IV, and some to Miguel I. My desire to learn why this should be led me to the explanation, but not before I had probed into the discovery of a continent and learned something of the consequences of the Napoleonic War. These seemingly unrelated events eventually led me to the explanation and to my awareness of the War of the Two Brothers.

Today Portugal is one of the smallest and least developed nations of Western Europe. There was a time, however, when Portugal played a far larger role in world history, one greatly disproportionate to its size. Those were the days of exploration when Portugal's greatness reached the four corners of the earth. Such men as Prince Henry the Navigator, Bartholomeu Dias, Vasco da Gama and Pedro Cabral laid claim to vast lands in the name of Portugal. As colonization followed exploration, the small country was hard pressed to find sufficient administrators and colonists to maintain control of her far-flung possessions. Because she had an insufficient population base to maintain large armies and the necessary administrators in her newly found colonies, these lands gradually slipped away from Portuguese control, finding other political accommodations. Such was the case of Brazil, Portugal's largest colony, which went her own way, but not before playing a vital role in the story at hand.

Portugal came into being as an independent state in the year 1143 after Alfonso Henriques succeeded in driving the Moors from the Algarve region of southern Portugal. Up until this time the country had been administered as part of the Spanish Kingdom of Leon. As a result of his successful campaign against the Muslims and negotiations with his cousin Alfonso VII of Leon, Portugal won her independence. Not only did Alfonso Henriques attain independence for Portugal, he at the same time doubled its territory. From that time onward Portugal held various degrees of alliance with Spain. During the period 1580-1668 Portugal was joined to Spain through a union in which Philip



Dom Alfonso Henriques, responsible for liberating Portugal from the Moors in the mid 1400s, is featured on the Banco de Portugal 1000 escudos note of 1942. The surrender scene is depicted at left.



Portuguese voyages of discovery.

II of Spain was accepted as Philip I of Portugal, but at no time during this period did the Portuguese lose their full autonomy. From the Braganca dynasty onward (1641-1901) the Iberian nation enjoyed full sovereignty.

Portuguese Exploration and Colonization

Expansion into Africa came naturally following the defeat of the Moors. Under the auspices of the Order of Christ, Prince Henry the Navigator drew together skilled geographers, mathematicians, astronomers and seamen to equip a series of expeditions in search of trade and suitable colonies. The ships chosen for this endeavor were caravels, developed by the Portuguese and the most seaworthy ships of their time. Prince Henry's earliest expeditions visited Madeira, the Canary Islands and the Azores. From thence he explored down the coast of Africa reaching present day Sierra Leone before his death. Such early voyages were expeditions into the unknown, often referred to as the "Sea of Darkness". Often ships turned back, terrified by tales of monsters lurking in the seas ahead, or from threat of mutiny. As each new voyage pushed further down the African coast these fears gradually subsided. As accurate charts were drawn and improvements made to the compass and navigation, individual ships and fleets became progressively larger. Subsequently, other men pushed onward; Bartolomeu Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, followed by Vasco da Gama, who with four ships, reached India ten years later. Soon trading posts were established in India at Goa, and control of sea trade assured with the defeat of the Muslim naval forces in the area. Further exploration took place up the east coast of Africa and ultimately to Canton in China where, in 1557, the Chinese emperor Shih Tsung granted the Portuguese a trading post at Macao. Thus the trade of the Orient with Portugal was assured.

Spurred on by these initial successes a second fleet was prepared under Admiral Pedro Cabral and sent westward looking for another route to the Indies. Instead, Cabral found the Brazilian coast, which he claimed for Portugal in 1500.

The discovery of Brazil aroused great enthusiasm at home. It was not until the discovery of gold and diamonds, however, that colonization took a firm hold. At this time Brazil was brought firmly under royal control. Because of this, Brazil is the only nation in South America today where the Portuguese language is spoken. All other Central and South American countries have



Portugal's last series of bank notes prior to the advent of the euro honored its early explorers.

Shown here are Pedro Cabral, the discoverer of Brazil, on the 1000 escudos note and Bartholomeu Dias, discoverer of the Cape of Good Hope, on the 2000 escudos. Vasco da Gama and Prince Henry the Navigator are featured on the 5000 and 10,000 escudos notes, respectively.

Spanish as their official language. Sugar cane was introduced into the colony and soon became the leading cash crop. Tobacco and raising cattle contributed to the colonial wealth, but it was not until the eighteenth century that coffee became a significant export product.

Events leading up to the War of the Two Brothers

Prior to the Napoleonic wars Portugal had been a long time trading partner with England. With the advent of the French Revolution, she joined England and Spain against France, sending both naval and army units to assist the English and Spanish in Catalan. This act led to a prolonged period of intense unrest in Portugal. In an effort to deny Great Britain food and other products produced on the continent, Napoleon set up an embargo of the European coastline to stop this trade. At this time Portugal was the only country still importing British goods. Portugal refused to go along with the embargo on trade. In 1806 Napoleon ordered all continental European ports closed to British shipping. To partially accomplish this, a French army was hastened across Spain in 1807 to invade Portugal. Napoleon had planned a minor campaign on the Iberian Peninsula, but in reality, the campaign turned into one of the key areas of conflict in the Napoleonic Wars. For six long years it drained French resources in troops, time and money.

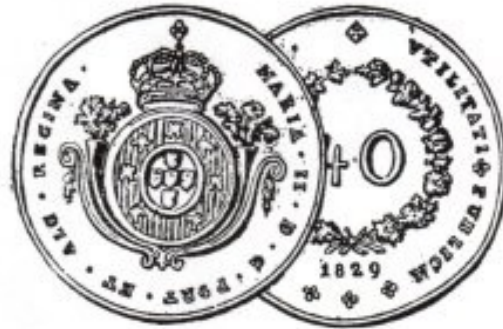
Portugal was then ruled by João VI, (John VI), who at the time was acting as regent for his insane mother, Queen Maria I. (See Table. 1) Portugal was rapidly subjugated by Napoleon's troops. In November 1807 Lisbon was occupied, forcing the royal family to flee to its colony in Brazil.

To escape the oncoming French, João ordered the royal family and court aboard a fleet of ships lying in the Tagus River, from whence they were escorted by a British squadron to Brazil. Thinking they had successfully deposed the Portuguese crown, the French were in for a rude shock when the British, under the Duke of Wellington, landed with an army of 13,500 men to contest the issue. There the British fought the French in inconclusive campaigns until 1812. The Peninsular War dragged on from 1807 to the spring of 1812. At that time Napoleon began withdrawing troops from Portugal in order to bolster his invasion of Russia. Seizing upon this opportunity, Wellington went on the offensive, gradually advancing into Spain, and ultimately forcing French troops out of the Iberian Peninsula. This campaign culminated in the British victory at Vittoria (1813) forcing Napoleon to

Table 1.

PORTUGUESE IMPERIAL SUCCESSION

Maria I	(1786 -1799)	Mad queen, incapable of rule.
João	(1799 - 1816)	Ruled as Prince Regent to Maria I.
João VI	(1816 - 1826) (1807 - 1821)	Ruled as king of Portugal. Fled to Brazil during Napoleonic War. Was king of Portugal, Brazil and Algarve.
Pedro IV	(1821 – 1826) (1826 - 1828)	King João's eldest son. Placed on throne of Brazil to keep Brazil in the Braganca dynasty. Ruled as Pedro I, emperor of Brazil. Abdicated on death of João VI. Became king of Portugal, backed by liberals.
Miguel I	(1828 - 1834)	João VI's eldest son. Usurped the throne in 1828 at the behest of the conservatives, thus bringing on the War of the Two Brothers. Ruled as king of Portugal. Exiled in 1834.
Pedro IV	(1834)	Resumes throne, dies months later.
Maria II	(1834 - 1853)	Ruled as the “Infante” queen of Portugal.



Portuguese 40 reis copper coin dated 1823, issued during the reign of João VI. (left) Gun or bell metal money of Maria II. (right). These coins were cast in denominations of 20,40, and 80 reis during Maria's voluntary exile on the island of Terceira in the Azores. The coins are inconsistent in that they are of various thickness and porosity.

withdraw from Spain altogether. The Peninsular Campaign was a disaster for Napoleon, as it not only proved a fatal drain on time, men and materials, it also enabled the British army under Wellington to gain confidence and experience, which led them to ultimate victory at Waterloo.

Immediately upon arriving in Brazil in 1807, João began setting up a government in exile. To do this, the former colony was elevated to the status of “kingdom” and was designated the center of the Portuguese Empire. The Brazilian colonists enthusiastically supported this change. The enthusiasm was mutual, as King João VI upon debarking in his new home is quoted to have said: “I have lost a kingdom but found a paradise!”

To accommodate the new imperial administration a supreme court, the royal treasury, the mint, the royal printing office and the Bank of Brazil were established in Rio de Janeiro. It is interesting to note that Brazil is the only instance in world history of a colony becoming the seat of government to its own mother country. In 1815 Portugal acquired a new name: that of the “United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarve”, making the former colony coequal with Portugal. Indeed, at this time Brazil’s population had surpassed that of Portugal itself. In the following year the insane queen Maria I died. Upon Maria’s death João ceased his role of royal regent and became João VI of the United Kingdom of Brazil and Portugal and the Algarve in his own right.

For the next act in this unfolding shell game, we must return to events taking place in Lisbon in 1820. After the departure of the French, metropolitan Portugal had been governed by an arbitrary and dogmatic regency. Popular discontent swept it aside and in its place reconstituted the Cortes, (parliament) which had not met in over a hundred years. Portugal found itself divided into two irreconcilable political camps: the conservatives, consisting of the landowners, the church and the privileged classes; and the liberals, who were demanding an overhaul of the entire political-economic system. The Cortes was reconvened for the purpose of drawing up a constitution. Dom João VI’s presence in Lisbon was essential to Portugal’s continued existence as a nation. On 22 April 1821 Dom João appointed his son Dom Pedro regent of Brazil, and two days later set sail for Lisbon. Upon departing, João VI advised his son to declare the independence of Brazil and to become its emperor, thus keeping Brazil in the Braganca family dynasty. Events proceeded rapidly. In September 1822 Dom Pedro solemnly declared the independence of Brazil and in December was crowned emperor as Pedro I of Brazil.

War of the Two Brothers

The sudden death of king João VI, in 1826, created a problem of royal inheritance. The War of the Two Brothers was essentially a war of succession in which João VI's two sons fought to become king. At one time or another it involved Portuguese conservatives, liberals, Spain, Great Britain, France and Brazil. The normal rightful heir to the Portuguese throne was João's eldest son Dom Pedro. The problem was that Pedro had taken the title Pedro I as Emperor of Brazil. Inasmuch as neither the Portuguese nor the Brazilians wanted a united monarchy at this point, Pedro I of Brazil temporarily returned to Portugal in 1826, becoming also king Pedro IV of Portugal. His purpose was to assist the Cortes in setting up a new constitution for Portugal. Having done this, Pedro abdicated the Portuguese crown in favor of his daughter, Maria da Gloria, then seven years of age. Since Maria was underage, Pedro appointed his younger brother Miguel to act as her regent when conducting affairs-of-state.

The Constitutional Charter worked out by Pedro and the Cortes attempted to satisfy both liberals and conservatives by granting both factions a role in government. Unfortunately the conservatives were not satisfied with this compromise as they regarded Miguel the legitimate successor to the throne, as he was Portuguese and Pedro was considered Brazilian.

Having set up the constitution recognizing Maria as queen and Miguel as regent, Pedro sailed back to Brazil while Miguel set sail for Portugal to assume his new duties. Upon his arrival in February 1828, however, Miguel was immediately proclaimed absolute monarch by his conservative supporters. This was not unacceptable to Miguel. The Cortes met in Lisbon in July and in rapid succession: repudiated Pedro IV's claim to the throne, declaring Miguel I the rightful king, while dissolving the parliament and nullifying the new constitution in the process.

This bit of skullduggery did not go unnoticed or unchallenged by the liberals, however. In May the army garrison at Oporto, Portugal's second largest city, declared its loyalty to Dom Pedro, Maria da Gloria and the Constitutional Charter. Soon the rebellion against Miguel and the conservatives spread to other cities and the civil war began in earnest. Miguel was quick to send troops to suppress this dissent. Liberals were widely persecuted. Many were confined to jail or to exile in Great Britain or Spain. This repressive state of affairs lasted for several years until the liberals could mount a counter attack.



Maria da Gloria, shown as the infant queen to be, at age fifteen, and later as Queen Maria II of Portugal. Note that the 1000 escudos bill carries the inscription “Maria II, by the Grace of God, Queen of Portugal and the Algarve”.

During the repressive years in the motherland Dom Pedro made the decision, once again, to return to Portugal in support of the liberal cause and to challenge his rival Miguel I. To do this he abdicated his position as Emperor of Brazil, placing his son on the throne as Pedro II of Brazil, and soon thereafter sailed for Great Britain. There he organized a military expedition, which was sent to the Azores, Portuguese territory which was still in liberal hands. A government in exile was established there in March 1831 on behalf of Maria da Gloria. The following year, backed by liberals in Spain and Britain, an army supporting Pedro IV occupied Oporto and was quickly besieged by Miguel's forces. Great Britain then sent a naval squadron under Commander William Glascock in HMS *Orestes* to protect British interests. In 1833 the liberals, still besieged at Oporto, tried a new tactic. With the help of the liberal navy, under the command of Charles Napier, alias Carlos de Ponza, Pedro IV sent the Duke of Terceira to southern Portugal where his troops landed at Faro and marched north to capture Lisbon. This was accomplished on 24 July. Another stalemate ensued for the next nine months with the conservatives controlling the rural areas and the liberals the cities of Oporto and Lisbon. In a last ditch effort to win the civil war, the conservatives abandoned the siege of Oporto and marched to the relief of Lisbon. At the end of the Oporto siege Pedro's forces numbered 17,500 men to Miguel's 24,000. Miguel's force was defeated at Evora before reaching Lisbon.

The War of the Two Brothers ended when Miguel was banished from Portugal, never to return. Peace was declared in May 1834. Pedro IV was restored to the throne and the constitution reinstated. Pedro IV died on 24 September 1834, which under the new constitution permitted Maria da Gloria to become queen as Maria II at the age of fifteen. Maria ruled successfully until her death in 1853.

Portuguese Monetary System in the Late 1700s and Early 1800s

The monetary unit in use in Portugal at the turn of the eighteenth century was the reis. Copper coins denominated in reis appeared there as early as the 1500s. The term "reis" stems from the Spanish "real" which circulated in Portugal until that country became independent of Spain. The "real" then underwent a name change to "rei" (literally meaning king), the plural being expressed as "reis". Coins bearing denominations in reis were used in both Portugal and Brazil well into the twentieth century. Currency in circulation consisted of copper, silver and gold coins and, after 1797, paper money. Five milreis, for example, is written 5\$000, while fractions of the milreis are written



Early nineteenth century scenes of Oporto (above) and Lisbon (below) appear on the backs of Banco de Portugal 100 escudo notes dated 1965 and 1981.

0\$500. Early Portuguese bank notes were issued by the imperial treasury, the Bank of Portugal not coming into existence until 1846.

The imperial Portuguese coat-of-arms commemorates Alfonso Henriques' defeat of the Moors and the liberation of Portugal. The arms consist of a large crowned shield within which are five smaller shields arranged in the form of a cross. Each small shield, in turn, contains five small dots, each representing one of the five defeated Moorish chiefs. During the reign of João VI, as regent of the dual empire of Portugal and Brazil, the Portuguese coat-of-arms was sometimes shown on coins as superimposed over the Brazilian globe.

At the time of João VI's death in 1826 Portuguese coinage consisted of 5, 10, 20 and 40 reis pieces in either copper or bronze; a silver coinage of 60, 80, 120, 200 and 400 reis; together with escudo, half peca and peca coins in gold. Both Pedro IV and Miguel I continued to produce coin types similar to those of the preceding reign. In addition, many Spanish and Spanish colonial pieces of eight were in circulation. In 1834 the government ordered that all such pieces still in circulation be countermarked with the Portuguese arms. By doing so, pieces of eight were revalued at 870 reis.

Supplementing specie were the bank notes of the Imperial Treasury, which ranged in value from 1\$200 to 20\$000 reis. Portugal did not have a paper currency until 1797, when the war between Spain and France severely disrupted Portugal's economy. Notes still in circulation in 1826 were from the earlier emissions of 1798, 1799, 1805 and 1807. Due to their lengthy and continuous circulation the notes were often officially repaired at the treasury and placed back into circulation. Today most of these notes are found in poor condition, some to the point of having been torn in half by wear, only to have been glued together with strips of paper at the treasury. Very few of the early imperial notes without the sunburst overprints have survived. It was the acquisition of several of the early sunburst overprinted bank notes many years ago that sparked my interest in the War of the Two Brothers. I could not understand why the names of two different kings should appear on these notes simultaneously. Now I know, and it is that information together with the history surrounding these notes, which I am sharing with you in this article.

As a group, the notes produced from 1798 to 1807 are an interesting lot. They were produced on laid watermarked paper with a counterfoil at left. As a result of the cutting of the counterfoil from the note, no two notes are exactly alike. The notes were printed using sienna brown ink and engraved plates.



During the Portuguese civil war both brothers struck coins for homeland circulation. The coins of Pedro IV (Petrus) and Miguel I (Michael) circulated side by side. Shown at left is the 40 reis of Pedro IV and at right, the 10 reis coin of Miguel I.



Portuguese gold coins circulating during the War of the Two Brothers consisted of the escudo, half peca and peca. The peca was valued at 7500 reis. Pedro IV pecas were minted in the years 1826 and 1828. The Miguel I peca was struck in 1828 only.

Perhaps it is the vignettes used on the different denominations, which make this group so fascinating. The designs are ornate and intricate in a rococo way and are typical of the artistic style of the late eighteenth century. Many vignettes are symbolic in meaning, while others reveal the romanticism of the day.



Among the symbolic and mystical presentations are ornate designs consisting of rows of ovals, which contain subjects from nature. One such example, the ten milries (10\$000) of 1799 contains six such ovals. The first shows a bird singing while perched on a tree branch, the second: a serpent climbing a pyramid, the third: a palm tree bathed in sunshine. At the center we



find a blank oval surrounded by a floral garland. A dry seal representing the Portuguese arms is to be found within the oval. To the right of center the fourth

oval contains the same palm tree surrounded by storm clouds, the fifth: the sun reflecting off a small mirror, and in the sixth position: the bird in the tree motif; only this time there are three birds perched on the branch together with one on the ground. A similar four panel 5\$000 nature note depicts a goat tethered to a tree, a mother hen with baby chicks, a rooster and a lion with cubs. Other nature vignettes include the sun shining brightly on flowers and orange trees and a beehive replete with a resident bee at the entrance! While charming, these designs require interpretation beyond that which I can provide. The balance of imperial treasury vignettes tend to the romantic. Among these idyllic scenes can be found a cherub and small child watering a flower; shepherds playing the flute and horn while the shepherdess weaves, with a dog at her feet and sheep in the background; and various scenes containing cherubs and castles.

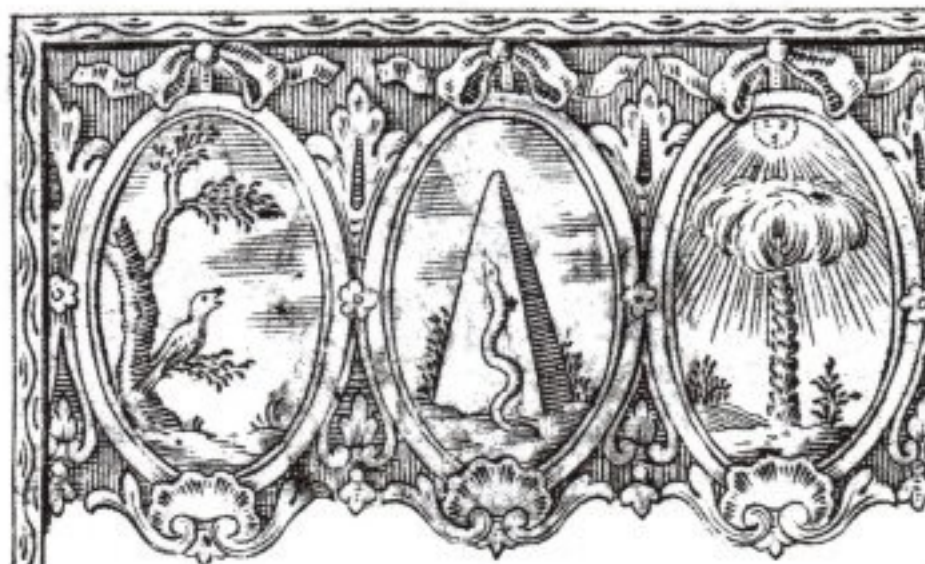
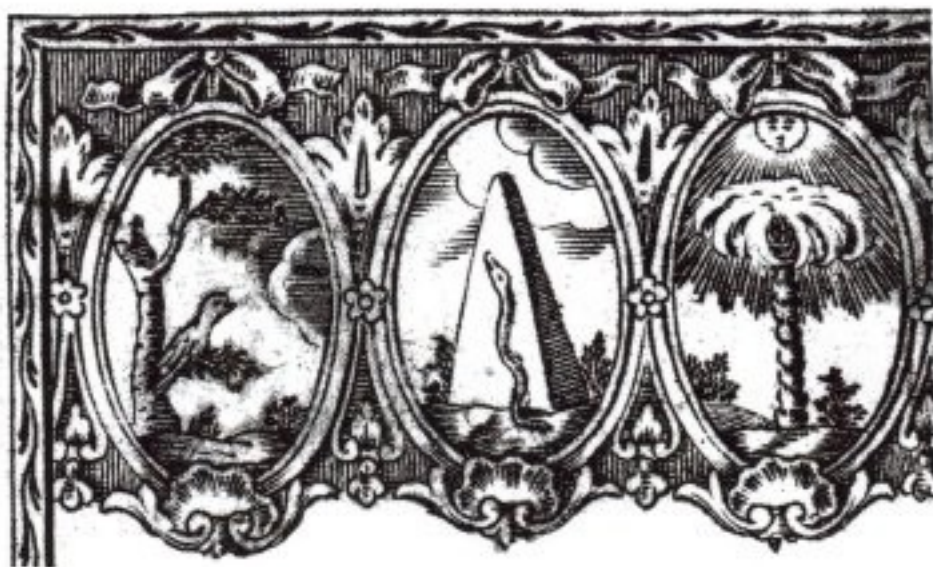
There is no doubt that in some cases several different plates were used when engraving the same note. A close inspection of two of the 1799 ten milreis notes described above will reveal this. Major differences occur between the same vignette. Take, for example, the oval containing the sun and looking glass. In one representation the sun's rays are seen as a solid beam of reflected light. In the other example, the light rays are shown as a series of dotted lines. Clearly much latitude was allowed the treasury engravers who prepared the plates used in making these notes. Continuing with our two 10\$000 examples we find other differences as well. Take, for example, the manner in which dates are presented. In one example, the date "1799" is entirely printed, while on the other note the date is shown as "179_ ", with the final nine written in by hand. I have also seen notes dated 1799 where the final "9" was raised from a printed "1798". Following the word "Lisbon" in the printed text (the place of issue) we find the written date in one example expressed as: "(day) de (month) de Mil Sete Centos Noventa e Nove" while in the second example the final "Nove" is written in by hand.

The last distinguishing feature, which I wish to address, is found on the reverse of these bank notes. Initially the back side of the note contained no distinguishing marks at all, as they were uniface when put into circulation. Over time in circulation they picked up oval black hand-stamp endorsements each time they were presented to the bank for payment. The average note will contain anywhere from several to thirteen or fourteen such hand-stamps. Each oval stamp contains the Portuguese arms, in various configurations, together with the month and year it was cashed, for example: "Novembro 1805". In



The two 10\$000 reis notes shown here and on the page preceding, may appear to be alike at first glance, but a close examination will reveal many differences. When one examines the vignettes within the ovals, it becomes apparent that different plates were used to engrave them. Also, one note contains printed dates (numeric and written), while the other has some information filled in by hand. The upper bank note was validated by the Miguel I conservatives, while that at the bottom was released by the Pedro IV liberals.

In addition may be found a combination of letters and numerals, which may indicate the particular bank which cashed the note before returning it to circulation. In some cases these oval hand-stamps can be found on the face of the note as well as the reverse. The earliest hand-stamp which I have seen, is dated "Fevereiro 1800", while the most recent bears the date "Marco 1817". Apparently the practice of endorsing notes ceased after 1817, as I have found no later dates than this. I do not know the reason for this. Perhaps the imperial treasury notes were discontinued; however, this seems unlikely as the next issue of Portuguese paper money did not appear until 1847 with the advent of the Banco de Portugal. It is hard to imagine the Portuguese economy living on specie alone during this period.



A close comparison of the vignettes appearing on 10\$000 reis bank notes, for example, will reveal that they bare not alike. Many differences may be discerned, including the border design; leading us to the conclusion that several engravers were employed in the preparation of these notes.



A good example of a nature motif is this 5\$000 reis imperial treasury note dated 1799. Shown in the four ovals are a goat tethered to a tree, mother hen with chicks, a rooster and lion with cubs. The significance of these items on a bank note is mystifying. Note that the numeric and written dates are partially filled in by hand.



This 20\$000 reis note (above) is a good example of a “romantic” motif as opposed to those dealing with “nature”. Although first issued in 1798, it was later overprinted with the sunburst of king Miguel I in 1828. Cherubs and children were popular vignettes and were often employed on imperial notes.



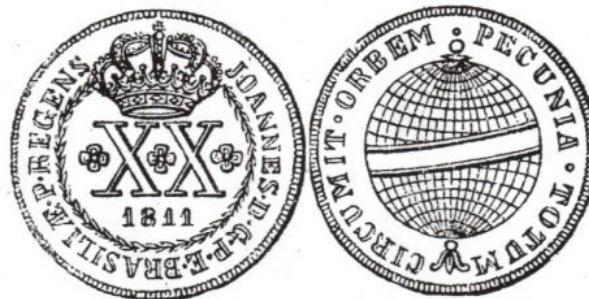
The reverse side of Portuguese Imperial Treasury notes were used for bank endorsements. Each time the note was presented at the bank for payment in specie, an endorsement was added before placing the note back into circulation. These oval handstamps contained, in addition to the Portuguese arms, the month and year of payment. This note has eleven such stamps ranging from February 1800 to October 1812.

One other special hand-stamp is worthy of mention. When examining these notes I have found in several instances an unusual endorsement. This one also contains the Portuguese arms within an oval. What sets it aside from the others is the caption at the top, which reads: CIPPAS TROPAS DO NORTE. The date appears as “Outurro 1813” at the bottom. My guess is that the seal is that of a Portuguese army garrison stationed in the north of the country, at the time Wellington was driving the French out of Portugal at the end of the Peninsular War.

Brazil's Monetary System Before, During and After the Napoleonic War

Soon after Cabral's discovery of Brazil in 1500, settlements were established along the coast. Shortly thereafter, the area was proclaimed a royal colony. With such a vast territory in the New World to defend, it is not surprising that the Portuguese found themselves under attack by other European powers intent upon sharing Brazil's new-found wealth. Among these interlopers were the Dutch. Their United West India Company occupied Portuguese territory around Recife for over fifty years. Here, in 1645, they struck the first coins in Brazil, a half century before the Portuguese set up their mint in Rio de Janeiro. This coinage consisted entirely of gold. Lacking the minting machinery necessary to make round planchets, they used thin sheets of gold, which were cut into square planchets, similar to the "klippes", or obsidional coins once used in the home country. These were then struck with round dies inscribed "ANNO - BRASIL - 1646" within a single beaded circle.

The first true Brazilian colonial coinage appeared during the late 1600s. These early pieces were minted in Bahia, Rio de Janeiro or Lisbon. Colonial copper coins were basically of one type up until 1832. They featured the value expressed in Roman numerals with crown above on the obverse and a globe on the reverse. Among these a great difference in size and metal content is noticeable among issues of the same denomination and year. Coppers of 10, 20, 37 ½, 40 and 75 reis were produced.



Brazilian colonial coinage was of one basic type up until 1832. These coins consisted of the crowned value in Roman numerals on the obverse and a globe on the reverse, such as this 20 reis specimen of 1811. Coins minted in Bahia or Rio de Janeiro contain a "B" or "R" mintmark on the band surrounding the globe. Those that do not, such as this coin, were the product of the royal mint in Lisbon.

In addition, most provinces had their own coinage, taking the form of various counter-stamps placed on the many Spanish reals (pieces of eight) of South American, Central American and Spanish origin, which circulated in the country. It is probable that these coins, when circulating outside the province of origin, were only accepted at a discount. Since various provinces did the counter-stamping, there are many varieties to be collected, some exceedingly rare. When one considers the 8 reals of Latin American origin, which were likely to have been circulating in Brazil at the time (mints in Bolivia, Mexico City, Guatemala, Peru, etc.), combined with the number of Brazilian provinces, the combinations are impressive. The 1808 law providing for the counter-stamping of 8 real coins directed the provinces when so doing, to raise the coins value to 960 reis. Since the Spanish pieces of eight were worth only 800 reis on the market, the government turned a nice profit on each counter-stamped coin!



The counterstamping of Spanish pieces of eight, then circulating in Brazil, was authorized by an 1808 law. Many provincial counterstamps exist. These were applied to whatever reals happened to be in circulation at the time. As a result, we find counterstamps on reals originally produced by a variety of Latin American mints. Shown here are the counterstamps of Minas Gerais province on a Spanish real of Carlos III. The obverse depicts a provincial crowned shield with the value stated as “960” below and, on the reverse, a banded globe with cross.

From João’s time onward, the practice of reducing the value of copper coins in circulation by counter-stamping was common. All this added up to a profusion of colonial issues. To add to this mass of coinage in circulation, several provinces circulated gold bars from 1799 to 1833. These bars typically showed the crowned arms, provincial identification mark, a serial number and weight. Additional mints, which produced early nineteenth century coins include Culabra, Golas, Minas Gerais and Pemambuco (gold).

Standard silver coinage consisted of 80, 160, 320, 640 and 960 reis. The odd denominations stem from the fact that, in Brazil a real was reckoned as 120

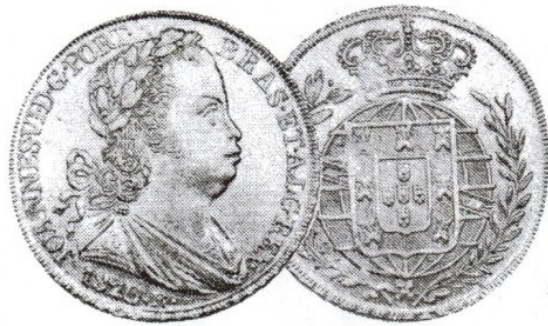


These three Brazilian silver 960 reis coins clearly show the royal progression. The first, dated 1809, is inscribed JOANNES VI. D. G.: PORT: E BRAS: D: P: REGENS (João as Prince Regent of Portugal and Brazil). The second coin, dated 1821, is inscribed JOANNES VI. D. G. PORT. BRAS ET ALG. REX (João VI, king of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarve).

The last coin, dated 1826, carries the title of Peter I, emperor of Brazil. It has the "R" mintmark of Rio de Janeiro. The motto IN HOC SIGNO VINCES appears on the reverse.

reis. Thus 960 reis was the equivalent of the Spanish 8 reals. A law dated 18 April 1809 was passed which raised the value of earlier copper and silver pieces by countermarking them with a Portuguese shield. Eight types of shields of varying sizes were used for this purpose.

During the Napoleonic War when the mother country was overrun by French troops, Dom João VI (then acting as regent for queen Maria I) fled to Brazil and set up the seat of Portuguese government in Rio de Janeiro. The royal mint and treasury were moved from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro at this time thus ending the period of colonial coinage. During João's rule, as king of a combined Portugal, Brazil and the Algarve, a whole new series of coins, similar to their predecessors, was produced. These pieces bear the legend JOANNES D.G. PORT: BRAS: ET ALG: P: REGENS. They show the Portuguese shield on the obverse and the Brazilian globe on the reverse. Only the gold 6400 reis issue bears the effigy of João VI.



Gold coin of a unified Portugal-Brazil-Algarve valued at 6400 reis and dated 1820. This coin was issued after Napoleon's occupation of Portugal. The effigy is that of king João VI who presided over the unification. At this time Rio de Janeiro was considered the capital of the Portuguese empire.

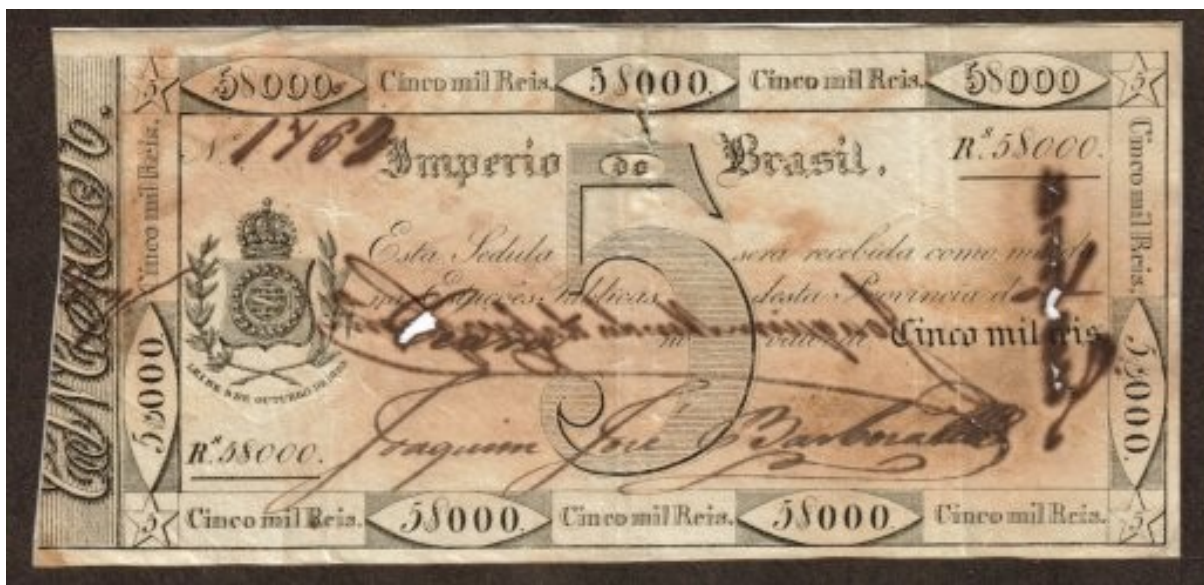
When João VI returned to Portugal in 1821, leaving his eldest son behind as emperor of Brazil, another series of coinage was created. These are coins of the Empire of Brazil. The first of these bear the legend PETRUS I D.G. CONST. IMP. PERP. BRAS. DEF. Some carry the motto IN HOC SIGNO VINCES (by this sign thou shall conquer) on their obverse. Upon the death of his father, João VI in 1826, Pedro abdicated as emperor of Brazil and returned to Portugal to claim the Portuguese royal title, leaving his son on the imperial throne to rule as Pedro II.

The first paper money did not appear in Brazil until that country became an empire. These were the copper exchange notes (Trocós de Cobre) issued in 1833. Rarely encountered by collectors today, the notes were issued as a means



Two João VI silver 960 reis coins of 1810 and 1816.

of removing debased copper coinage from the provinces. The name of the individual province concerned was written on the note in ink and then the notes were signed. Most of these notes, when encountered, show varying degrees of corrosion damage to the paper caused by the tannic acid contained in the early ink used.



The first currency of the Empire of Brazil consisted of copper exchange notes (Tracos de Cobre). They were issued to provincial offices to be used in exchange for debased copper.

The first issue of national treasury notes appeared in the same year under the heading “Imperio do Brazil”. These large and impressive engraved notes were released in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 mil reis. Brazilian currency bore these same denominations even after conversion from the mil reis to the cruzeiro system. Allegorical figures of Agriculture,



This 2 milreis note was issued by the National Treasury of the “Imperio do Brazil” dy decree dated 1 June 1833. The imperial arms are shown at right, while the principal vignette is a figure of Agriculture complete with cornucopia. The note was engraved by the London firm of Perkins, Bacon and Company.

Commerce, etc. form the principal vignettes. All Imperio do Brazil notes have counterfoils on the left and were hand-signed. Numerical denominations appear in the four corners on the obverse. The reverse of these notes are blank. They were the work of the London printer Perkins, Bacon and Company.

Oddly enough, two of the principal players in the War of the Two Brothers drama, Dom João and his eldest son Pedro, are not be found on Portuguese currency at all. For their portraits we must look to Brazil. On Brazilian currency of the 1940s and 1950s we will find João VI as king of a united Portugal and Brazil, and Pedro IV, shown as Brazil’s first emperor.

So, now we have seen how the investigation into two little sunbursts, placed on Portuguese currency of the late 1700s, bearing the names of two contenders to the same throne, has lead to a fascinating, if sometimes confusing, tale of two countries.



Oddly enough, the principal players in the War of the Two Brothers saga are not to be found on Portuguese currency. For their portraits we must look to Brazil. On Brazilian currency we find Dom João VI as king of a unified Portugal and Brazil, and Dom Pedro IV, as the first emperor of Brazil (Pedro I of Brazil). As might be expected Miguel I, the usurper, is nowhere to be found!

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