

GUATEMALA 1897 FORGERIES AND FAKES SCOTT 60-74

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The Exposition issue of 1897 was only valid for the year of the exposition, at the end of which the unsold stamps were sold to stamp dealers, except for the 18c, 75c and 150c values. Those three values were overprinted and used as telegraph stamps. This resulted in a shortage of those values and collectors had a difficult time acquiring a complete set of this issue. There are technically no 'forgeries' of this issue, but there are fakes made by altering the telegraph stamps, bogus surcharges and one bogus "SERVICIO INTERNO" overprint.



Figure 1 - Fake 'El Jicaro' cancel on genuine (left) and altered (right) stamps

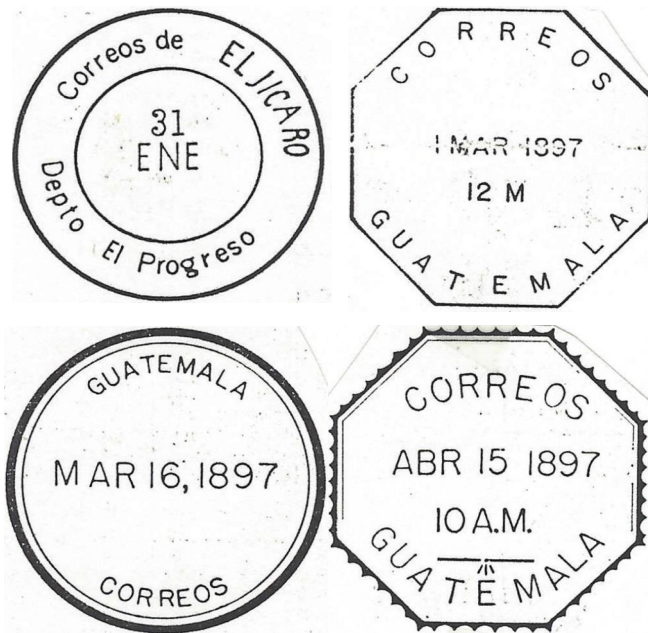


Figure 2
Fake Cancels on Exposition Issue Stamps

The most dangerous fakes are the altered red overprinted 18c, 75c and 150c telegraph stamps. These fakes were created by removing the red ink of the overprint. The altered stamps often have a blurred, smudged impression rather than the well printed engraved stamps. If the printed side of the stamp is rubbed on a sheet of white paper it leaves a dark smudge on the paper; originals never do this. Often the altered stamps have bogus cancels from the non-existent town of El Jicaro (Figure 1) and others as illustrated in Figure 2 [1].

The forger Saureck created a 'SERVICIO INTERNO' overprint and it exists on stamps in different shades of ink as well as on postal cards (Figures 3 and 4). Although these were listed in major catalogues for almost a century, there is no question as to their unofficial status [2].

In November, 1897, the 12c stamp was surcharged 'UN CENTAVO/1898'. Fakes of the inverted and double surcharge one inverted can be identified by comparing measurements of the surcharge [3]. Bogus



Figure 3
Typical Bogus Saureck Surcharges
With Violet and Carmine Ink

surcharges, also listed in catalogues as genuine for many years, are more easily identified. The first is printed on the 2c stamp in either violet or red and some are inverted. The second has large numeral '1's at each side of the surcharge, some with violet and some with black ink, as well as inverted numerals (Figure 5) [4].



Figure 4 - Bogus Saureck Overprinted 1897 Postal Card



Figure 5 - Bogus Surcharged '1's



Bogus Saureck Overprint

References:

- [1] Illustrated in *Linn's Stamp News*, January 31, 1966.
- [2] Goodman, Roland A., ed., *Guatemala 2*, p. 579, Robson Lowe, Ltd., London (1974)
- [3] For measurements of genuine, see Goodman, Roland A., ed., *Guatemala 1*, p. 165, Robson Lowe, Ltd., London (1969)
- [4] Goodman, op. cit., p. 166.

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