

FORGERIES OF MEXICO'S FIRST DESIGN

Mexico's early philatelic popularity sharply declined with the appearance of large quantities of forgeries and reprints in the early 1890's. Much confusion remains. This exhibit surveys the problem as it affects stamps of Mexico's first design, considering: I – **Counterfeits** or facsimiles created between 1865-1892 by various printers to fill early demand for space-fillers; II – **Reprints** created from original and modified plates, including the **Gothic Issue**, reprints and genuine; III - **Forgeries**, genuine stamps and other concoctions altered to create more valuable varieties.



Genuine Un and Dos from Gothic Issue 1867 thick paper on large piece, the Un in black on white (error of color, normally black on green) was chemically altered. Visible under UV light.

Pages 2-5: The Counterfeits/Facsimiles. Shown by Types described by Joe Stuart in MEXICANA (January 2001). All pertinent types shown, of which two are dangerous, one engraved as are the originals.. The rest are lithographed and mostly crude and undeceptive.

Pages 6-11: The Reprints. Sometime between 1868-1880 the original plates, along with some of the original canceling and overprinting devices were stolen from the Post Office Mexico City and used to create unauthorized reprints, printed on original papers. Large quantities of the 4R and 8R of 56-61 were printed along with the Medio of 1861. These are the most dangerous. Much smaller quantities of the other values were produced by subsequent forgers, the 56 Medio and Dos, 67 thin paper Un (very rare) and Medio & Cuatro quite scarce. Additionally an Un Real (all issues) was produced by modifying the value tablet of another value, most likely the 2R. The "Un" was re-engraved into a portion of a stolen plate with the ES of Reales erased. This forgery is also very scarce, but dangerous.

Pages 12-13: Gothic Issue of 1867 including reprints and genuine stamps with forged Gothic overprint.

Pages 14-16: The Forgeries. This section will show genuine stamps that have been modified by added district names, forged cancels, adding stamps to stampless covers, and other means of enhancing the value of a stamp by devious means.

STUART TYPE I

Litho - Earée 3, Serrane A, first described in 1865, all 56-61 colors known, most canceled.

1856 colors



Medio

Dos

Ocho

1861 colors



Medio

Un

1861 colors



Dos

Cuatro red

Cuatro black

Ocho black

Ocho green

STUART TYPE II

Litho- Earée 1, scarcest, only the 2 reales grayish green is known.



Dos – Only 2 copies known.

STUART TYPE III

Litho - Earée 2, Serrane B, Blue Medio only



STUART TYPE IV

Litho – Earée 4, Serrane G, 1856 2,4 & 8 r. All have cancels.



Dos



Cuatro

STUART TYPE V

Litho- Earée 5, Serrane D, All 56,61 and 67 medio known. With and without cancels.

1856 colors



Medio



Un



Dos



Cuatro



Ocho

1861 colors



Medio



Un



Dos



Cuatro



Ocho

STUART TYPE XI

Litho on card- Only 2r gray green. Was cut from Victorian trade card.



56 Dos

STUART TYPE XIII

Litho- Medio Real only medio known in gray magenta & reddish brown. With cancel



Medio – One of two copies known

STUART TYPE VIII

Litho - Serrane E, all 1856 colors, 61 4r, 67 medio. FRANCIS FOURNIER
Unused, some with op and cancels.



56 Medio



56 Un



56 Ocho



56 Dos



56 Cuatro w/op



67 Medio

STUART TYPE X

Litho - All 56, 61 except bl/yellow most with cancels.

1856 colors



Medio



Un



Dos



Cuatro



Ocho

1861 colors



Dos



Cuatro



Ocho



Ocho

STUART TYPE IX

Litho – Serrane F, all 1856 except 8r, all 61 except medio & 4r bl/yel. All were meant to be canceled.



56 Un



56 Dos



56 Cuatro



56 Medio



61 Un



61 Dos



61 Cuatro



61 8r black



61 8r Green

THE DANGEROUS COUNTERFEITS

Both of these varieties are known by very few copies. The designs are nearly identical to genuine stamps and fortunately rare.

STUART TYPE VII

Engraved - Earée 7, Serrane H, 56 & 61 Ocho only. Some w/o cancels, one variety with Gothic Mexico OP.



56 violet



61 green



61 brown



67 Gothic op

STUART TYPE XVI

Photo/Litho- Jean de Sperati counterfeit of the 1867 gray Medio only. Was a photographic copy of a genuine stamp. No overprint unused.



1867 Gray Medio
Most copies are stained

THE REPRINTS

There were a number of unauthorized reprints of the First Design Stamps, shown initially are the most commonly found varieties. After the demonetization of the First Design, likely in the 1870s original plates were removed and thousands of the 1856 Cuatro, Ocho & 1861 Medio, Cuatro and Ocho both colors were printed. Some are fairly easy to spot due to color, others are very difficult. The forgers attempted to duplicate the same paper and colors. They also were able to obtain some of the original district name devices and cancels.

1856 REPRINTS



Cuatro Reales reprint

Many of the Cuatro reprints have vertical Laid Lines.

REPRINT

Whiter paper



Paper Opaque
Can't see design

GENUINE

Sharper image



Paper Translucent
Design shows through

The Cuatro and Ocho stamps were reprints on hard white paper. The paper of the originals tended to be less white and more translucent. The red color of the Cuatro reprints ranges from red to salmon. The originals colors were in the same range but in general the reprints are lighter in color and the printing more worn. The Ocho Reales reprint color ranges from dark reddish gray to purple. The color of the originals can usually be distinguished as more lilac to gray and less red. 1856 reprints are found with and without district names and cancels. Most are used and found in every old time collection.



Reprint



Genuine



Reprint

Design shows through



Genuine

Notice how the Reprint is generally darker in color and the printing of the Genuine in much sharper.

The Reprint is opaque, the Genuine translucent showing the front design through the paper.

REPRINTS OF THE 1861 ISSUE

The paper of all the 1861 reprints was identical to the original printings, a soft paper with a heavy weave. Weave/mesh orientation was where the forgers made their mistake, although using the original plate, paper and attempting to duplicate the original colors, they failed to orient the mesh of the paper weave correctly.

The Genuine 1861 stamps have a horizontal mesh paper, the reprints have a vertical mesh paper. There are a very few exceptions, a small quantity of 61 4r & 8r reprints are found on the correct horizontal meshed paper, but this test will work with 95% of all 4 & 8r 1861 reprints. More of the Medio real reprints are found with the correct horizontal mesh, and are therefore the most dangerous of the reprints.

1861 MEDIO REAL

Various forged overprint and cancels



Sharp print – vertical weave



Horizontal weave



Vertical Weave



GENUINE

1861 CUATRO REALES

Black on Yellow

Blurry/fuzzy



Reprint

Sharper Image



Genuine

Red on Yellow



Reprint



Genuine

The **black on yellow reprints** are close to the originals in color, however the image tends to have a fuzzy appearance, the ink not quite as dark. The ink of the **red on yellow reprints** tends to be more red, the originals being more of a brown/red color, again the print not as sharp on reprints as the plates were quite worn by the time these were made.

THE 1861 OCHO REALES

Genuine 1861 Ocho Reales all have horizontal weave/mesh, most of the reprints have vertical weave, therefore easily detectable. The reprints also tend to be grainier.

REPRINTS

Black on Brown



Horizontal weave



Vertical



Vertical



Vertical

GENUINE



Green on Brown



Horizontal weave



Vertical



Vertical



Vertical

GENUINE



The color of the Green reprints tends to be more olive Green, the genuine are lighter Green

The following reprints, 56 Medio, Un Real and Dos Reales in addition to some reprints of 1867 thin paper stamps were not mass produced in the same manner as the preceding and are dangerous but rare.

THE 1856 MEDIO REAL REPRINTS

The 1856 Medio Real Reprints difficult to discern and fortunately rare. The paper is opaque rather than translucent as the originals and they are found with forged cancels and overprints.

Reprints



Genuine

THE UN REAL REPRINTS

Genuine



The Un Real fakes were made from a modified plate, erasing the ES from REALES and inserting an UN in the value tablet. The alignment of the value tablet letters differs from the originals. Notice how the right leg of R in the genuine points to the right of the center scroll, on the reprint it points to the center. Also the L of REAL in the genuine is to the right of the scroll below, whereas on the forgery the L is to the left of the bottom scroll.

Reprint/Fake

The Un Real reprints are found in colors of 1856 (yellow on white), 1861 (black on green) and the thin paper variety of 1867 (blue), as well as colors not found on the originals such as Rose. All are very scarce and for that reason are not much of a problem for collectors.



Rose



1856 Yellow



1856 Yellow



1867 Blue

THE UN REAL PRINTED ON BOTH SIDES FORGERY



1861 Green (POB variety)



The front side of this forgery is a genuine pair (photo)

The genuine 1861 Un Real Tampico printed on both sides variety is a great rarity, forgeries were created by printing the Un Real reprint on the back of genuine Tampico pairs.

THE DOS REALES REPRINTS

The so called "Dos reales reprints" were made from a modified plate and therefore not true reprints. They are very scarce, a survey among collectors produced less than 50 examples. Analyzing the existing copies it is believed that a printing plate was produced with at least 8 positions. Pos. 1 shows a double impression not found on originals. 19 different district names have been identified on these stamps with at least as many cancels.

Position 1 examples

Double impression with plate line at left



Tulancingo



Chalco



Campeche



Acapulco



Vera Cruz

REPRINTS PRINTED IN COLORS NOT FOUND ON ORIGINALS



Medio red/yellow



Dos black/brown



Ocho gray/white



Ocho black/white

Were these stamps printed on the correct color paper they would be difficult to identify as reprints as the printing quality is very good.

CANCELLATIONS AND OVERPRINTS ON REPRINTS

Nearly all districts are found on reprints, including the use of some of the original cancel and overprint devices. Notice that the cancels tend to be grayish and grainy. By looking at many of the reprints it becomes possible to develop an “eye” for them so that they become readily detectable due to ink shade and printing quality.



The Tampico oval was listed in Wilson but is now known to be a bogus cancel.



Acapulco



Campeche



Chiapas



Cuernavaca



Durango



Chalco/ Cautla Moreles



Guadalajara



Guadalajara



Guanajuato



Guanajuato



Lagos



Mazatlan



Monterrey



Morelia/Zamora



Morelia/Jiquilpan



Orizava/Franco



Toluca/Ojuelos



Queretaro



Sultepec



Tabasco/Franco



Temascaltepec/Tejupilco



Tulancingo



Zacatecas

THICK PAPER FORGERIES

The Thick paper Gothics were printed in colors and paper from 1861 issue and 1856 red/white Cuatro. The common forgeries are the Medio, Cuatro red on white (1856 color), and Ocho, especially green on brown.

MEDIO REAL



Examples of both reprints and genuine stamps with forged **MEXICO** overprint and cancels.

THE CUATRO REALES RED ON WHITE

There are two basic types of this forgery, genuine red on yellow stamps bleached to remove the yellow creating a red on white stamp, and reprints with forged Gothic overprint and forged cancels.



Yellow stamps bleached >>>



Example of genuine red/yellow

Genuine red/yellow stamps that have been bleached.



Genuine/forged op & cancel



Reprints with forged overprint and cancel

OCHO REALES FORGED OVERPRINTS/CANCELS ON GENUINE AND REPRINTS

Genuine stamps

Reprints



GENUINE STAMPS WITH FORGED GOthic OP



1856 Medio

1856 Un

1861 Un

1856 Dos

1856 Ocho

1861 Cuatro

THIN PAPER FORGERIES

The Thin paper Gothics were fortunately not mass produced and very scarce. They are attributed to Barral/Diaz of Mexico and to unknown forgers in Germany in the early 20th century. They are known on similar paper to the originals including a watermark, albeit the wrong one *Papel Sellado*. The Gothic overprint is thicker than the genuine.

Medio

Papel Sellado

Un Real

Un Real



Cuatro

Ocho

Ocho



VARIOUS FANTASIES CREATED USING GENUINE STAMPS

STAMPS THAT DID NOT ORIGINATE ON THE WRAPPER



2 genuine Mazatlan stamps applied to a wrapper that originated in Guadalajara, they did not originate on this wrapper.



A Dos and bisected Un to make the implausible 2 1/2 R rate and did not originate on this wrapper.

GENUINE STAMPS WITH SPURIOUS OVERPRINTS AND CANCELS



All genuine stamps with cancels that never existed and forged overprints

The number "2" cancel is found on Gothic Issues as well as other issues, it was not genuinely used.



The Admon Gral oval was not used on the Gothic issue, whereas the oval Administration cancel was. This stamp also has fake OP.

VARIOUS FORGED BISECTS

Examples made using original stamps with the district name trimmed off and then applied to either genuine Sello Negro wrappers or to fabricated wrappers or pieces and tied by forged cancels.

Genuine Lagos Sello Negro with stamp tied by forged Lagos Oval



Forged Concordia (Mazatlan) cancel



Genuine stamp tied to fake wrapper by fake Tonalá cancel.

DETHUIN FORGERY

Raoul Ch. De Thuin was a prolific forger of Mexican stamps as well as other countries. He used genuine stamps and created items of higher value through manipulation. By creating fake cancels, overprints, and surcharges he would enhance the value of common pieces. He was very knowledgeable and an artist.



An Un Real bisect representing Medio Real rate from S. Martin Texmelucan (Puebla) De Thuin used a genuine Un real stamp tying it to faked wrapper and painted in the cancel.

SPLITS CREATED USING BOGUS CANCEL DEVICES

These cancels never appeared on genuine Mexican stamps and are bogus.



Acambaro (Maravatio)
1/4 of 1861 Cuatro R. (reprint)



Reprint – Zapotlan
1/2 of Ocho



Genuine stamp – Vera Cruz
1/8 of Ocho R.



Reprint – Carmen
1/8 of Ocho