

GUATEMALA FORGERIES AND FAKES 1878 SCOTT 11-14

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The 1878 "Indian Woman" issue was typographed on paper tinted in the color of the printed stamp. They were perforated 13.2 and some of the paper was watermarked. There are numerous perforation varieties such as imperforate between, double and imperforate. In addition to two forgeries this issue was unofficially 'reprinted' in Guatemala from some of the original clichés.

There were two forgeries as well as unofficial printings, all with perforations varying from the originals. The first forgery of all four values is perforated 12.5 or 13 and is attributed to Fournier. The distinguishing characteristic is the feathers in the headdress which in the genuine cross the inner oval while in the forgery they do not. They often have a fake cancel similar to an original but with thicker letters and a date which is usually 27 MAYO 78 or 18 AG 78. The cancels are the same as applied to the Liberty Head forgeries.



Feathers in Genuine



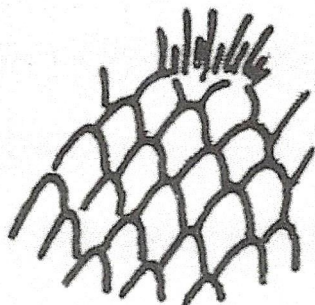
Feathers in First Forgery



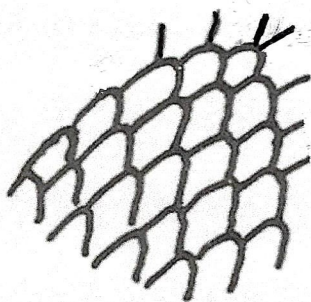
Typical Fake Cancels on First Forgery



The second forgery of the 1p yellow, is perforated 12.8 or imperforate and is attributed of Bela Sekula of Budapest. The easiest way to identify it is by the pineapple in the upper right in which the forgery has 7 distinct lines coming from the top of the pineapple whereas the genuine has a cluster of many fine lines.



Genuine



Lines in Pineapple on Forgery Two



Fake cancel on Second Forgery (Possibly Raoul de Thuin)



Reprint with
tête-bêche pair



Fake Large Numeral 8 Cancel
On Reprint



Imperforate Second Forgery



Original

Imperforate Reprint

The unofficial reprints are on white paper without tint and perforated 12. They were printed in many shades of the original colors. There are a variety of fantasies including double impressions and tête-bêche pairs. They are usually uncanceled but sometimes canceled with a fake large numeral 8. The ISGC obtained a quantity of the sheets of 25 (5x5) from Leon Bilak in 1962, broke them into pairs to distribute to members, with the result that some members received tête-bêche pairs [1]. This accounts for some of these items in the market.

There are many distinguishing characteristics of these stamps other than those noted in this article, such as the number of pearls in the necklace. One matter worth mentioning is identifying imperforate copies of the reprints. As there is no perforation and the image is identical to the genuine, recourse must be made to the shade of the ink and the paper to identify the forgery. They are both printed on white paper but the reprint paper is softer, ungummed and does not have the lithographed tint. In addition the reprints are not printed in the same shade of ink [2]. See illustration for color of a forged imperforate compared with the original.

References:

Jickling, David L., "Detecting Fakes Among The Classic Issues", *El Quetzal*, Vol. 44, No. 280, pp. 90-4, International Society of Guatemala Collectors (1994)

Goodman, Roland A. ed., *Guatemala 1*, p. 87, Robson Lowe, Ltd., London (1969)

Tyler, Varro, "Focus on Forgeries", *Linns Stamp News*, p. 120, Sydney OH (1993)

[1] Day, H. Summerfield, "Notes and Queries", *El Quetzal*, Vol. 13, No. 137, p. 46, International Society of Guatemala Collectors (1962)

[2] In this series of articles about forgeries I have purposely avoided including the myriad of minor details distinguishing the original and forged stamps including descriptions of the paper and other details of the printed images for the sake of simplicity and will only do so when necessary to distinguish them.

The International Society of Guatemala Collectors was formed in 1948 and is Affiliate No. 38 of the American Philatelic Society. The Society is committed to assisting everyone interested in collecting Guatemala. Its award winning journal El Quetzal is published quarterly. Membership levels include a US\$10 online membership which includes access to most society publications including its two award winning handbooks, and the electronic version of the journal. If you collect Guatemala you will find much more information available on the society website:

<https://guatemalastamps.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?sl=197696320>