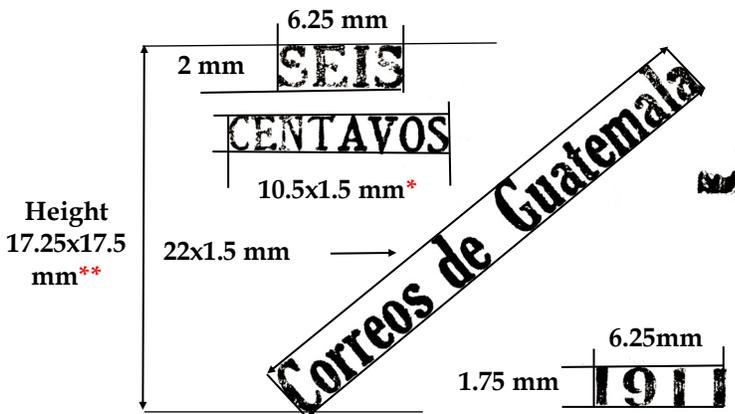
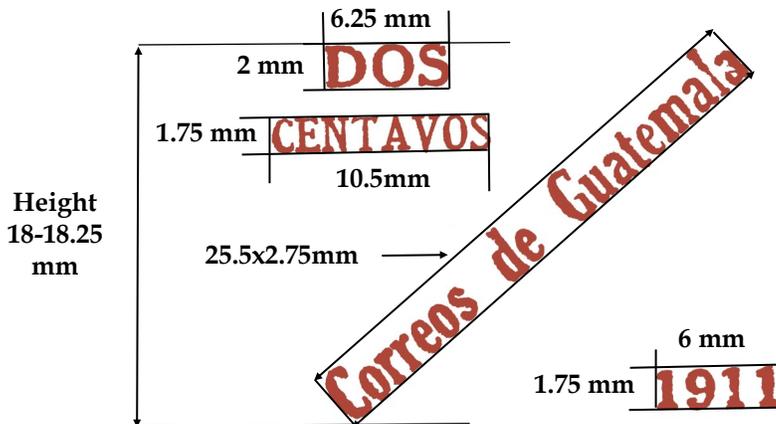


GUATEMALA FORGERIES AND FAKES 1911 SCOTT 144-5

By David Reitsema ISGC No. 803

Like preceding issues, Scott 144-5 were required to meet shortages of much-used denominations. Genuine surcharged stamps with gum are difficult to find and catalogue values are irrelevant; multiples of 4 or more are scarce to rare. The 1911 issues were all low value surcharges on higher value basic stamps, and thus there was no financial benefit in forging these for postal use; all non-genuine are fakes or bogus. The other 1911 surcharge, Scott 143, was described in a previous article in this series.



* Centavos with wide 'S' is 10.75x1.5mm

** Height with wide 'S' is 16.5mm

As with all surcharge overprints, the quickest way to determine if the surcharges are genuine is to measure them. This will eliminate almost all fakes. The second way is to compare the stamp with the listings in *Guatemala 2* ("G2"); any variety not listed there is a fake.¹ If any question remains it will be necessary to verify that the stamp corresponds with the particular printing of the basic Waterlow stamp used in the production of the 1911 surcharges.

The measurements of the genuine surcharges are illustrated here. The surcharge images were produced by Eric Dyck using color separation technology, but have been enhanced due to the difficulties inherent in this process, and therefore the individual letters may not be 100% accurate.

G2 states that the genuine 2c on 5c surcharge is a 'bright true red' and 'firmly' printed. Fakes are often in dark red, red with a rose, cerise or orange tinge, and some impressions are blurred. As a practical matter for collectors, the best way to identify a bright true red is comparison with a group of other colors; in many instances this is a somewhat subjective analysis.²

There are no varieties of these issues such as inverted or double surcharges listed in the Scott catalogue. In G2 a double surcharge is listed for the 6c on 10c. The contributors to G2 spent a great deal of time studying this issue and reluctantly included the latter variety.

The 6c on 10c has two characteristics which help in identifying a genuine surcharge: 1) there is always a gap between the crossbar of the '9' and the middle of the vertical stroke (this also exists on some fakes), and 2) genuine stamps are an orange yellow shade, and surcharges on stamps with a darker orange shade are suspect. Not all fakes are on the darker orange color (see illustration on following page).

Fakes of the 2c on 5c include normal, double, double inverted, double with one inverted, one line missing and various sorts of se-tenant pairs. They are known in red, black and red plus black. Fakes of the 6c on 10c are found with normal surcharge position, and also inverted, double, and pair, one without surcharge.

G2 lists 5 fakes of these 2c surcharge and 5 fakes of the 6c surcharge, as well as 4 bogus items, and reference to that is a starting point for detailed study of these issues. Bogus surcharges include 2c on 5c with black surcharge, 2c on 10c, 6c on 5c black surcharge and 6c on 10c black surcharge with added '6' under 'ta' of 'centavos'. One bogus surcharge, BFB, is illustrated below. The list of fakes and bogus items in G2 is by no means-inclusive and collectors will find many others.

The John N. Luff collection was formed in the early twentieth century and included highly specialized Guatemala material of that period. Luff identified "Wenk" and Reinoso and Sons as the source of these fakes. He attributed cerise colored ink to Wenk and stated that Reinoso used a 'watery ink'.³



Orange Yellow

Dark Yellow or Orange Tinged



Bogus Surcharge BFB

Footnotes

1. Goodman, Roland A., *Guatemala 2*, pp. 370-5, Robson Lowe, Ltd., London, 1971.
2. For an interesting discussion of analysis of ink color in identifying forgeries of these surcharges, see Kearton-Gee, Kerry, "The 1911 2c on 5c Double Surcharge", *El Quetzal*, Vol. 54, No. 318, pp. 28-9, International Society of Guatemala Collectors, 2004.
3. This information is contained in the editorial notes and correspondence of Roland Goodman, Editor of *Guatemala 2*, which are located in the Society archives and are available for inspection. In preparing this section of the Society's handbooks, Goodman often referenced the Luff collection which he had personally examined in 1959. The Luff collection with extensive early twentieth century material including studies of forgeries is currently in the archives of the Philatelic Foundation in New York City and available for inspection there.

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:

www.GuatemalaStamps.com

