

GUATEMALA FAKES AND FORGERIES

SCOTT 1-4

By David Reitsema ISGC No. 803

Collecting Guatemala stamps is a complex and interesting challenge and stamp collectors are helped by a large body of available information. One area of difficulty are fakes and forgeries of early Guatemala stamps, and the purpose of this series of articles is to assist in identification of these spurious items. Once these are described it is quite easy to identify genuine stamps.



Original

6 Vertical Bars
plus part of 7th

6 Vertical Bars



Forgery Type 2

shield in the center has six and one-half vertical white bars in the upper left.

The forgeries are all rather crude lithographic printings and readily identified in comparison with the genuine once a collector is aware of them. They are roughly perforated 13 and printed in many colors. They are characterized by easily identifiable fake cancels done by the forger to obscure the printed impression. Other occasional fake cancels include smudged bogus large numeral cancels and the circular date cancels common on the indian woman issue. There are at least three different forgeries.

The first lithographed forgery (Alexander) is on white wove paper has 34 rays around the sun and the upper half of the shield has five white bars and often parts of a sixth and seventh. They are often cancelled with the obliterator having parallel horizontal lines above and below slightly curved vertical lines (*Album Weeds* ["AW"] image type 62).

The second lithographed forgery (Spiro) is on medium very yellowish-white paper has about 32 rays around the sun and the shield with six vertical bars but no trace of a partial seventh bar. They are usually cancelled with the same obliterator (image 62).

The first issue of Guatemala has been extensively forged and the problems for collectors are compounded by the proliferation of fake cancels. The purpose of this article is to describe these forgeries and help collectors unknowingly keep from acquiring these fanciful items.

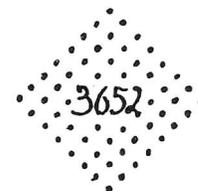
The genuine stamps were engraved and perforated 14x13.5. The sun in the center of the stamp has 36 rays. The



Fake Cancel on
Original



62



37



38



Un Centavo Forgery Color Varieties



Diez Centavos
Forgery Color Varieties

The third lithographed forgery (Zechmayer) is on hard very white wove paper has 31 rays and the shield has seven perfect vertical bars. They are usually cancelled with a diamond shaped array of dots (AW type images 37 and 38).

References:

Album Weeds, Rev. Robert B. Earee, 3rd ed. reprint, Part III, p.424, Manuka-Ainslee Press, Canberra, Australia (n.d.)

"The Serrane Guide", Fernand Serrane, *The American Philatelist*, p. 640, American Philatelic Society (July, 1994)

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

The International Society of Guatemala Collectors was formed in 1948 and is Affiliate No. 38 of the American Philatelic Society. 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. More information is available on the society website:

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