

GUATEMALA FAKES AND FORGERIES

SCOTT 5 - 6

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The 1873 issue of Guatemala was the subject of two forgeries. The purpose of this article is to describe these forgeries and help collectors keep from unknowingly acquiring these fanciful items.

The genuine stamps were lithographed and perforated 11.7. Issued in 1873, it was believed for 65 years thereafter to have been printed in Guatemala. It was in fact printed in England [1].

There are two forgeries of this issue and both are fairly easy to identify. The first forgery is attributed to Fournier. It has the printed word "FACSIMILE" below the shield and exists on both of the values. These are easy to see once it is known that they exist. *Guatemala I* warns that fakers have sometimes painted out the word



Original

'FACSIMILE'



'FACSIMILE' obscured by fake cancels

FACSIMILE and often obscured this by applying a dark fake cancel over that area, and examples are shown below.

The second forgery is very easy to identify by the large circle in the center of the scroll. This fake was used as an illustration in the Scott catalogue for more than 75 years to the great annoyance of Guatemalan philatelists. In 1958 ISGC member Roger Frigstad persuaded Scott to replace the illustrations for the 1873 4r (it was the second forgery), the 1875 1r Liberty, and the 1878 1/2r



Second Forgery

indian woman. Scott's editor explained that the forgeries were pictured to prevent the illustrations from being used by forgers, but Frigstad responded that the illustrations were being relied on by collectors in determining their stamps' authenticity [2].

References:

- [1] *Guatemala 1*, Roland A. Goodman, ed., p. 72, International Society of Guatemala Collectors (1969)
- [2] "Newsletter", *El Quetzal*, Roger Frigstad, Vol. 10, No. 109, International Society of Guatemala Collectors (1958)
- "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. 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. More information is available on the society website:

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