

Local Postage Stamps of 1898

Issued in Zamboanga

By Bob Yacano

Following the defeat of the Spanish Armada and the return of Emilio Aguinaldo to the Philippine Islands, Spanish soldiers were in a difficult position. The soldiers pursued by the US Military, as well as the local guerrillas, had few sanctuaries until they could be repatriated. Resources were meager, since military pay from Spain had been delayed, and Spanish soldiers were treated with suspicion by the Filipino people.

Geographically, only two areas remained under Spanish control, and were designated as collection areas for military personnel who would eventually be returned to Spain: La Union Province (see IPPS Journal Third Quarter, 2003) in the North, and Zamboanga, in the South. Both areas maintained their Spanish character and control with the consent of the US Military.

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As was the Spanish practice, local officials decided to overprint existing stamps to reflect the new situation. Palmer¹ lists the following stamps as officially overprinted: 1m, 2m, 3m, 5m, 1c, 2c, 3c, 5c, 6c, 8c, 10c, 15c, 20c, 40c, 60c, 80c, 1p, 2p.

Harridine² lists the following quantities, crediting "a very old article by a German philatelist, and are merely given as an indication of rarity." 1m (1,000) 3m (550), 1c (564), 2c (152), 3c (394), 5c (286), 6c (98), 8c (336), 10c (22), 15c (400), 20c(114), 40c (22), 60c (160), 80c (?), 1p (4), 2p (67).

Harridine also lists the following varieties: 1m: inverted surcharge, double surcharge 3m: pair, one without surcharge; 10c: inverted overprint. Both Palmer and Harradine further state that all legitimate overprints are in Black. Red, Blue, Violet overprints are known and considered spurious.

Few covers have surfaced with these issues. The two shown have Graus certificates. It is interesting that both covers show a typical Spanish period Zamboanga cancel strike and a "Received" strike in Manila. Of special importance is the example of the 80c tied to cover. This is the only reported 80c on cover, and may be the only known 80c stamp in any form.

As with the entire local provisional issues of this period, the information presented here is just the beginning. If you have any information regarding this subject, or examples of reported or unreported relevant material, please contact me.

Endnotes:

1: The Postal Issues of the Philippines, F.L. Palmer, J.M. Bartels Co., NY, NY, 1912. Pages 53-54

2: Philippines Postage Stamp Handbook, 1854-1982, Peter W.A. Harradine, Mc Farland and Company, Inc., 1987, pages 82-83



3c, 8c and 10 c values on cover.



40c and 80c on cover. Only certificated copy of the 80c stamp reported