

NEW SPANISH PHILIPPINE "MUESTRA" VARIETY DISCOVERED, UP-DATED LIST OF GENUINE "MUESTRA" TYPES, AND DESCRIPTION OF KNOWN "MUESTRA" FORGERIES

by *Don Peterson*

In recent years, Spanish Philippine postal stamps overprinted with several forms of MUESTRA, meaning "specimen," have become increasingly popular with Philippine collectors. The last update of these types was by Peterson (1990). For information on the production, history, and use of specimens, refer to Peterson (1988).

This article describes the discovery of a new MUESTRA variety, updates the description and list of genuine types on postal and newspaper issues, and describes known forgeries of the MUESTRA overprint.

New Muestra Type 1 Variety Discovered

In September 1993, Bob Yacano obtained several specimens from a collection that closely, but did not exactly, fit the description for Type 1. Through Mr. Yacano, I had the opportunity to purchase several of these stamps. The key difference between the new type with Type 1 is that some of the lines in the word MUESTRAS in the new type are distinctly thicker. This variety of Type 1 is considered genuine because the overprint is identical in size and color; and the ink appears identical to the original when the reverse sides are compared under strong light. Since it is similar to Type 1, it is named Type 1A. Table 1 describes these differences in more detail.

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Up-Dated List Of Genuine Muestra Types

Table 1 is an up-dated description of specimen types of the Spanish Philippines. It includes Type 1A and revisions to other types since the 1990 article. Table 2 is an up-dated list, since 1990, of known occurrences of specimen types on postal and newspaper issues of the Spanish Philippines. It also includes revisions to the relative scarcity indicators. Following Table 2 are illustrations of each of the specimen types.

Table 1
Description of Specimen Types of The
Spanish Philippines

Type 1. Handstamped "MINISTERIO DE ULTRAMAR MUESTRAS" in two lines. The top line, "MINISTERIO DE ULTRAMAR," has san serif letters. The bottom line, "MUESTRAS," has serif letters. 15mm by ?mm. Blue. Usually with no gum. Found on 1871-1879 issues.

Type 1A. Similar to Type 1, except that some of the lines in "MUESTRAS" are thicker. For example, the left vertical line of the "U" is 1mm. wide, instead of 3/4mm. wide, as in Type 1. The vertical line of "E" is 1 to 1-1/4mm. wide, instead of 1/2 to 3/4mm. wide, as in Type 1.

Type 2. Handstamped "MUESTRA" with sans serif letters. 2mm. by 14mm. Red. With gum. Found on 1886-1896 issues.

Type 3. Handstamped "MINISTERIO DE ULTRAMAR MUESTRAS" in two lines. The top line, "MINISTERIO DE ULTRAMAR," has serif letters. The bottom line, "MUESTRAS," has sans serif letters. 17mm. by 42-1/2mm. Violet. With gum. Found on 1890-1896 issues.

Type 4. Typeset "MUESTRA" with sans serif letters. 1 to 1-1/2 mm. by 10-1/2mm. Violet. With gum. Found on 1897 issues.

Type 5. Typeset "MUESTRA" with sans serif letters. 3mm. by 13mm. Violet. With gum. Found on 1897-1898 issues.

Table 2
Known Occurrence Of Specimen Types On
Postal And Newspaper Issues Of The
Spanish Philippines

Scott No. 1	1A	2	3	4	5	
39 (cardstock)	VR					
40	R	R				
40 (cardstock)	VR					
41 (cardstock)	VR					
42 (cardstock)	VR					
43 (blue color proof)	R					
44	R					
45	VS	VS				
45 (imperf proof)	R					
46 (rose color proof)	R	R				
47	VS					
48	VS					
49	VS					
50	VS					
51	R					
52	VS					
54	VS					
56	VS	VS				
57	VS					
58	VS					
64	VS					
140			S	VS		
141			S	VS		
142				VS		
143			VS		VS	VS
144			S	VS		
145			S	VS		
146			S			
147				VS		
148			S	VS		
149			S			
150			S	VS		
151			S	VS		
152		S				
153		S	VS			
154 (pref. proof) *			VR			
155			VS			
156		S	VS			
157		S	VS			
158		S	VS			
159		S				
160			S	VS		
161			S			
162			S	VS		
163			S			

Scott No. 1	1A	2	3	4	5	
164			S	VS		
165			S	VS		
166			S	VS		
167			S			
168			S	VS		
169			S	VS		
170			S	VS		
171				VS		
172			VS	R		
173			S			
174			S	VS		
175			S	VS		
176				VS		
177			S			
178			S	VS		
179			VS		VS	
180					R	
192						S
193						S
194						S
195						S
196						S
197						S
198						S
199						S
200						S
201						S
202						S
203						S
204						S
204 (Imperf. proof)						VR
206						S
207						S
208						S
209						S
210						R
211						R
P1			S			
P2			S			
P3			S			
P4			S			
P5			S			
P7				VS		
P8				VS		
P9			S			
P11				VS		
P12			S	VS		
P13			S			
P15				VS		
P16				VS		
P17			S			
P18			R	R		
P19				VS		
P20				VS		

* Scott #154 was delisted from the 1994 Scott Catalog, but was included as a footnote.
 Note: Relative scarcity is indicated by S=scarcely, VS=very scarce, R=rare, and VR=very rare.
 4:4/4



Type 1 on #45



Type 1A on #45



Type 2 on #153



Type 4 on #143



Type 3 on #171



Type 5 on #143

Muestra Forgeries

Since 1990, four different forgeries of specimen overprints have been identified. These include one of Type 1, one of Type 2, and two of Type 5. Only one (referred to as the First Type 5 Forgery in this article) had been previously described in the philatelic literature (refer to Agustin and Peterson, 1991). Collectors should use caution when purchasing specimens, unseen, through the mail. The following is a description of each of the known forgery types.

Type 1 Forgery

This forgery was found on Scott #177, an 1890 issue. It is described as follows.

Genuine

1. Occurs on 1871-1879 issues only.
2. Overprint color blue.
3. Overprint ink fairly solid and the letters are well-defined.

Forgery

1. Occurs on 1890 issue.
2. Overprint color blue-green.
3. Overprint ink and letters blotchy.

Type 2 Forgery

This forgery was first discovered in 1993, but is believed to be an earlier forgery. Found on 1890s issues. It is described as follows.

Genuine

1. Slim "A" with small triangle.
2. Overprint color red.
3. Ink slightly blotchy when reverse side observed under light.
4. Overprint 14 mm. long.
5. Top bottom circles in "S" are approximately the same size.
6. Applied by handstamp.

Forgery

1. Broad "A" with large triangle.
2. Overprint color red-brown.
3. Ink more constant (solid) when reverse side observed under light.
4. Overprint 15 mm. long.
5. Bottom circle of "S" slightly larger than top circle.
6. Appears to have been applied by typeset.

First Type 5 Forgery

This forgery was described by Agustin and Peterson (1991). It is believed to be a recent forgery, first discovered in 1989 or 1990. Found on 1898 issues. Refer to the above article for more details. It is described as follows.

Genuine

1. Overprint 13 mm. long.
2. Well-formed letter "M".
3. Short leg of "R" arches downwards.
4. Slim "A" with small triangle.

Forgery

1. Overprint 14 mm. long.
2. "M" with crude half-serif at inside bottom of right leg.
3. Short leg of "R" extends diagonally to the right.
4. Broad "A" with large triangle.

Second Type 5 Forgery

This forgery, although discovered in 1993, is believed to be an earlier forgery. Found on 1898 issues. This is a very deceptive forgery. It is described as follows.

Genuine

1. Overprint 13 mm. long
2. Slim "A" with small triangle.
3. Ink slightly blotchy when reverse side observed under light.
4. Applied by typeset.

Forgery

1. Overprint 12.75 mm. long.
2. Slimmer "A" with slimmer triangle.
3. Ink more constant (solid) when reverse side observed under light.
4. Appears to have been applied by handstamp.

If you have any additional information on Spanish Philippine specimens or forgeries of specimens, please contact Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20012.

References

- Agustin, S., Jr., and D. Peterson. "Bogus MUESTRA Overprinted King Alfonso XIII Stamps of 1898." *Philippine Philatelic Journal*. Vol. XIII. No. 1 First Quarter 1991. Eden, NY.
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