

WATERMARK VARIATIONS OF THE 1856 1R GREEN AND 2R CARMINE ISSUES (SCOTT #8, 9, 26, AND 27)

By Don Peterson

The 1856 1 r green and 2 r carmine issues (formerly referred to in the Scott Catalogue as #8 and 9, respectively, but now relegated to a footnote) are watermarked with a loop design. This article describes variations of the loop design.

On September 27, 1854, the Postmaster-General in Madrid issued a circular specifying overseas postage rates for Cuba and the Philippines of 1-real and 2-reales for the single and double weight rate. A Royal Order from Madrid, dated December 18, 1854, restated these rates and indicated that they were to take effect in June 1855. A watermark, in a series of loops, was prescribed by a Royal Order, dated October 16, 1854. Stamps satisfying these rates were typographed on greenish, watermarked paper and were printed in Madrid. The stamps were issued in Cuba on April 24, 1855 (Scott #2 and 3) and Puerto Rico, probably about the same time (Jones et al. 1982). However, their release in the Philippines did not occur until January 1, 1856 (Bartels et al., 1904). The 1 r green and 2 r carmine stamps were re-issued in 1873, handstamped "HABILITADO POR LA NACION" (Scott #26 and 27, respectively).

A watermark is a mark or pattern created in paper during or after its formation. The watermark is an integral part of the paper and cannot be removed or substantially altered without destroying the paper itself. For that reason, the use of watermarked paper on stamps may

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have been used to prevent forgeries. Repeta (1987) has written an excellent comprehensive article on watermarks in postage stamp paper. From that article, it can be assumed that the 1855 watermark was manufactured on a cylinder covered with bits of wire cloth comprising the loop design. The watermark is not impressed on the paper. Rather, the moist paper fibers simply rest on the watermark design on the cylinder. The raised relief areas on the cylinder collect fewer fibers during the settling process, producing a watermark thinner than the surrounding paper. From Repeta (1987), the loop watermark is a "continuous" type of watermark, in that the watermark is a continuing design throughout the paper.

Jones et al. (1982) describes three types of watermarks for the Cuba issues and indicates their relative scarcity. TABLE 1 describes and illustrates the three watermark logo types, TYPE 1, with one set of watermark loops alternating with the other, is by far the most common type. Jones et al. (1982) stated that TYPE 1 occurs on approximately 90 percent of the Cuban stamps observed. Based on my inspection of Philippine stamps, and the discussion of TYPE 2 below, I would estimate that approximately 80 percent of these Philippine stamps are TYPE 1.

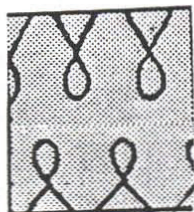
Jones et al. (1982) states that 10 percent of the Cuban stamps observed are TYPE 2, with both set of watermark loops opposite each other. Stamps from my Spanish Philippine collection provide further insight into this type. In my collection, I have a used block of four of the "HABILITADO..."-surcharged 2r carmine issue (Scott #27). The block shows one complete watermark loop pattern and two half loop patterns. However, one of the half loop patterns is shifted, so that the two sets of loops are directly across (opposite) of each other. I believe that at least one continuous watermark loop design was off-set in each sheet of the 2r carmine issue. Since each sheet consisted of 200 stamps in 10 horizontal rows of 20, approximately two rows of 20 stamps, or 40 stamps total, were probably affected by the shift of one row of the loop design. That would indicate that approximately 20 percent of the stamps in the 2r carmine sheet show the TYPE 2 watermark. I would assume this same percentage also applies to the paper for the 1 r green values; which was formed in the same manner.

Finally, Jones et al. (1982) indicates a "rarely found third type," TYPE 3, which, due to an error in the placement of the sheet in the printing press, the complete watermark loop is shown. I have not seen this type on Philippine stamps, but if it does occur, indeed, it is rare.

Watermarks can also be inverted, reversed, side-wise, or combinations thereof. The watermark design of the 1855 printing makes it difficult to determine if it is inverted or reversed. However, it would

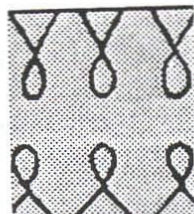
TABLE 1
DESCRIPTION OF WATERMARK TYPES OF THE 1856 1R
GREEN and 2R CARMINE ISSUES
(SCOTT 8, 9, 26, AND 27)

TYPE 1



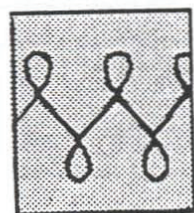
One set of loops alternates with the other set of loops. 80% of stamps observed. Common.

TYPE 2



The two sets of loops are directly across (opposite) from each other. 20% of the stamps observed. Scarce.

TYPE 3



The complete loop design is shown on the stamp. Rare.

be readily apparent if the watermark were side-wise. For this to happen, the watermarked sheet would have to be placed in the printing press side-wise. I am not aware of any side-wise watermarks on these Philippine stamps; however, if a side-wise watermark was found, it would be a rare find.

If anyone has any additional information on the loop watermark of the Philippine 1856 and 1873 issues, please contact Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20012.

REFERENCES

Bartels, J.M., F.A. Foster, and Captain F.L. Palmer. POSTAGE STAMPS OF THE PHILIPPINES. 1904. Boston, MA.

Jones, W.M.. And R.J. Roy, Jr. A HANDBOOK OF THE STAMPS OF CUBA - PART I - THE SPANISH DOMINION 1855 - 1898. 1982. Winter Park, FL.

Repeta, L.E. "Watermarks in Postage Stamp Paper." THE AMERICAN PHILATELIST. February 1987. State College, PA.

Finally Confirmed!
The Use of Vignette Plate Number 158246
on the One Peso Barasoain Church
Scott No. 494

By Joseph M. Napp

Finally confirmed - after 51 years ! Craig A. Eggleston has confirmed the actual use of the One Peso Printing Plate #158246. This plate number was found on a full pane of 25 stamps of the 1946 One Peso stamps with the **VICTORY** and **COMMONWEALTH** overprint (Scott No. 494). Printing plate #158246 printed the vignette of the Barasosin Church in black ink. (COVER)

Plate 158246 was 'the last' printing plate made for Philippine stamps during the American Administrative Period. It was completed in March 1946 along with companion One Peso plates 158244 and 158245.

At that point in time, one could suspect that the original One Peso Vignette Plate #129954 made in 1934 could have been reaching the end of its anticipated service life. Up to this point in time, the original Vignette Printing Plate #129954 had printed 130,343 panes of One Peso stamps for Scott Nos. 393, 421, 443 and 494.

Normally, the US-BEP recorded the 'Number of Impressions Made' by all of its printing plates. This data was kept to indicate when a plate was nearing the end of its anticipated service life and when a replacement plate was required. However, the US-BEP did not document any plate usage data for plates 158244, 158245 or 158246.

The US-BEP made two shipments of the 1945 One Peso **VICTORY** and **COMMONWEALTH** stamps (Scott No. 494). The first shipment was made in the fall of 1944 and it contained 420,000 stamps. The second shipment was made in the spring of 1946 and it contained 1,009,000 stamps.

Hypothetically on a purely statistical basis, one could suspect that 25% of the last shipment stamps were printed from Printing Plate #158246. (1,009,400 stamps in the 2nd shipment 4 plates 25 stamps in a pane = 10,094 potential plate blocks).