

PLATE FLAW ON 20c BISTRE-BROWN  
ISSUE (SCOTT #87)

by Donald J. Peterson



Non-flawed and flawed Scott #87

The 1882 Philippines 20c bistre-brown issue (Scott #87) occurs with a plate flaw. Interestingly, there are more stamps with the plate flaw than without it. The horizontal line above the "20" is frequently missing, as well as some of the design above the line, giving the appearance of a prominent white (colorless) area above the "20."

After inspecting several hundred "loose" stamps of this issue, it was evident that the flaw was more common than the non-flawed design. From this sample, the flaw occurred on approximately 90 percent of the stamps.

I recently obtained a full sheet of 100 (10 X 10) of this issue (sheet number 0.003.128). From that particular sheet, 80 stamps, or 80 percent of the stamps, were flawed. On the sheet, the flaws varied in degree from stamp to stamp. The non-flawed stamps occurred in a seemingly random manner throughout the sheet. Another sheet, actually the top margin strip of ten (sheet 0.003.076) in the fabulous Nestor Jacob collection, was also inspected. Like mine, all of the ten stamps in the top row showed the flaw.

Little information is available on the printing of this and other Spanish Philippine issues of the 1880's; however, it appears that the flaw occurred early in the printing process and probably remained throughout the remainder of the printing.

In this unusual instance, collecting the non-flawed stamps is more

challenging than collecting the flawed stamps.

Another interesting but unrelated matter about this stamp is that there is little agreement in the philatelic literature as to the first day of issue, although all references agree it was in 1882. Mencarini (1896) indicated it was issued in February, the earliest date given: Hanciau (1905) indicated it was in March: Bartels et al. (1904) and Palmer (1912) both indicated July 19. Perhaps a study of cancel dates on the stamps will provide the answer. The used stamps and postal history in my collection provide no clue, all showing dates after 1883.

If you have any additional information on this issue and the flaw, please contact PPN or Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20012.

### References

- Bartels, J.M., F.A. Foster, and F.L. Palmer. *The Postage Stamps of the Philippines*. 1904. Boston.
- Hanciau, L. "The Postal Issues of the Spanish Colony of the Philippines." *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*. September 30, 1905. London.
- Jacob, N. Unpublished photocopy of Spanish Philippine collection. 1983. Madrid.
- Mencarini, J. *Catalogo Descriptivo de los Sellos de Correos y Tarjetas Postales de las Islas Filipinas*. 1896. Manila.
- Palmer, F.L. *The Postal Issues of the Philippines*. 1912. New York.

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## FROM THE ALLIED INTELLIGENCE BUREAU TO MINDANAO: THE "FREE PHILIPPINES" GUERRILLA STAMPS

*by Walter H. Adler*

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During World War II a 2-centavo stamp known as the "Free Philippines" Guerrilla stamp was issued for use on the island of Mindanao. The stamp was printed in Australia and delivered to Col. Wendell W. Fertig, Commanding Officer of the 10th Military District, Guerrilla Forces, with headquarters at Esperanza in Agusan Province, Mindanao, Philippines.

The stamps were printed in sheets of twenty-five (Figure 1), in rows of five by five. All were of 2-centavo denomination, printed in blue