

THE 1870 SCOTT ISSUE (# 39-42) WAS ACTUALLY ISSUED IN 1871

by Don Peterson



FIGURE 1.

Philippine Scott #'s 39-42
showing allegorical figure of Spain.

Since the early 1900's, the Scott catalogue has erroneously listed the four Philippine stamps with the allegorical figure of Spain (Scott # 39-42) (Figure 1) as having been issued in 1870. However, as this article will demonstrate, these four stamps were actually first issued in March 1871.

The philatelic literature is inconsistent regarding the first date of issue. Some references indicate 1870, while others indicate 1871. In spite of this confusion, there are two citations in the philatelic literature which provide credible support for the March 1871 date.

First, the noted authority on Spanish Philippine stamps, Juan Mencarini, indicated in his 1896 catalogue that these stamps were issued in March 1871. Although several cataloguers prior to 1896 listed the year date as 1870, none of these command the credibility of Mencarini. Of all the early cataloguers of Philippine stamps, only Mencarini actually resided in Manila and was known to have had access to official post office records. Unfortunately, Bartels et al. (1904), a reference believed to have been used by the Scott catalogue, did not cite the March 1871 date, but instead listed the year date of 1870.

The second major reason for citing the March 1871 date comes from the official order authorizing the issuance of the stamps. A translation of that order is found in Hanciau (1905). The order by

the Secretariat of the Chief, Civil Government of the Philippines, Manila, dated February 7, 1871 (Figure 2), stated (in part):

“. . . upon the necessity for issuing to the public the postage stamps of the values five, ten, twenty, and forty centimos de escudo, recently received from the Peninsula [Spain]; . . . the Treasury Department is authorized to issue for public use the postage stamps described below.”

Clearly, the order indicates that the stamps were “recently” received; and, by that order, were authorized for release to the public on February 7, 1871. This is consistent with Mencarini’s conclusion that the actual release date was in March 1871. Hanciau stated that the stamps were placed into circulation in March 1871. Palmer, who was a co-author of Bartels’ 1904 catalogue, recognized March 1871 as the correct first date of issue for these stamps in his 1912 catalogue.

“Secretariat of the Chief Civil Government of the Philippines.

“Manila, February 7, 1871.

“In view of the report from the Treasury Department upon the necessity for issuing to the public the postage stamps of the values of five, ten, twenty, and forty *centimos de escudo*, recently received from the Peninsula;

“Upon the report of the General Post Office Department, and by the advice of the Council of Administration, the Chief Government ordains:

“1. The Treasury Department is authorized to issue for public use the postage stamps described below. The same Department will give notice, as soon as all the offices for the sale of stamps have received supplies, of the exact day upon which the sale of these stamps is to commence, also of the date and the method to be employed for the withdrawal from circulation of the stamps at present in use, indicating at the same time the manner in which those that may be in the hands of private persons may be exchanged.

“2. Until the Chief Government makes fresh arrangements, the present tariff for the prepayment of postage on correspondence between the islands, for the peninsula and adjacent parts, and for the provinces beyond the seas, will remain in force, at the rate of: one real fuerte for each four drachms of weight, or fraction of four drachms, making use of the stamps of five and of twenty centimos de escudo to make up one real fuerte, and of those of ten and forty centimos to make up two reales fuertes. The above-named Department will give such orders as may be considered necessary, so that the persons charged with the sale of the stamps may make themselves acquainted with the manner in which the said stamps are to be used, in combination, according to the weight of the letters.

"3. For correspondence within the same Island, it is decided that from the day on which the Department shall put in circulation the new stamps, the tariff shall be as follows: for a single-rate letter, up to 4 drachms inclusive, a stamp of 5 *centimos de escudo*, or four *cuartos* will be used; from 4 to 8 drachms, a stamp of 10 *centimos de escudo*, or two of 5 *centimos*, equivalent to 8 *cuartos*; from 8 to 12 drachms stamps of the value of 12 *cuartos* must be affixed, and so on progressively. A stamp of the value of 4 *cuartos*, or 5 *centimos de escudo*, must be added for each 4 drachms or fraction of 4 drachms.

"4. Upon Registered letters, either for the interior, for the Peninsula, its possessions and adjacent Islands, or for the provinces beyond the seas, one stamp of 40 and another of 10 *centimos de escudo* must be affixed, in addition to those required for the postage of the letter.

"5. The Treasury Department will take the necessary steps for providing the General Post Office with the specimen stamps that may be required for purposes of comparison.

"To be passed, published, and a report rendered to the Ministry of the Colonies.

(Signed)		"La Torre
	"True copy	
(Signed)		"Clementi"

FIGURE 2.

Order by Secretariat of the Chief, Civil Government of the Philippines, Manila, dated February 7, 1871. Translated by Hanciau (1905).

It is interesting to note who concurs with the March 1871 date and who doesn't. The current Stanley Gibbons catalogue and Harradine (1977) concur, as well as Nestor Jacob of Madrid. On the other hand, Galvez (1900) and the current Edifil Espana and Scott catalogues list the 1870 date.

A review of my records indicates that no stamps or covers are known with dated cancels prior to March 1871. Further, in the David Feldman auction in Geneva, Switzerland, on April 16-19, 1986, Lot # 22803 was a cover from Manila to Cadiz, Spain, dated March 1, 1871. It was affixed with a pair of the 5-centavos stamps (Scott # 39) and was described in the catalogue as a FIRST DAY OF ISSUE (Figure 3).

The Scott catalogue should revise the listing of this issue to indicate it was issued in March 1871 (or 1871), rather than in 1870.



FIGURE 3.

Lot # 22803 of David Feldman Auction, Geneva, Switzerland, on April 16-19, 1986, showing Philippine cover with pair of 5 centimos stamps (Scott # 39). It was described as a Manila, March 1, 1871 "FIRST DAY OF ISSUE."

REFERENCES

Bartels, J.M., F.A. Foster, and F.L. Palmer. *The Postage Stamps of the Philippines*. Boston. 1904. 107 pages.

Galvez, M. *Catalogo Galvez: Sellos De Correos y Telegrafos*. Segundo Edicion, 1900-1901. Madrid. 1900

Hanciau, L. "The Postal Issues of the Spanish Colony of the Philippines." *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*. July 31, 1905. page 8-9. London.

Harradine, P.W.A. *Philippine Postage Stamps, Handbook, Section 1, Spanish Period, 1854-1898/99*. London. 107 pages. 1977.

Mencarini, J. *Catalogo Descriptivo De Los Sellos De Correos y Tarjetas Postales De Las Islas Filipinas*. Manila. 1896.

Palmer, F.L. *The Postal Issues of the Philippines*. New York. 1912. 84 pages.

Also refer to the current Edifil Espana, Scott, and Stanley Gibbons catalogues.