

THE SPANISH LOCAL WAR TAX STAMP

by Don Peterson

If you are familiar with a 5 centimos charity-like stamp depicting a map of the Philippines, it is not a Philippine issue, but instead, it is a privately-printed Spanish war tax stamp issued in Spain during the Spanish-American War. Here is the story of the stamp from bits of information I have uncovered.

Soon after the United States declared war on Spain on April 25, 1898, Spain passed legislation authorizing towns in Spain to issue local war tax (patriotic) stamps to raise funds to help the Spanish troops in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines. Since the war ended almost as soon as it started, very few Spanish towns had time to print their own stamps, and most towns that did, withdrew them soon after they were issued. Except for the Spanish towns of Alicante, Jerez, and Cordoba, most of the Spanish town war tax stamps are rarely found used or on cover. I know little about these local town stamps, or whether or not they depicted a Philippine's theme. When the tax stamp was applied to mail, the tax amount was collected in addition to the required postage. Additionally, several Latin American countries also issued war tax stamps in support of Spain.

Private organizations could also issue war tax stamps. Sometime after April 1898, a set of five war tax stamps, showing the rate of 5 centimos, was privately-printed in Spain by the Director of *LA ILUSTRACION FILA TELICA*, a stamp magazine. The five stamps variously depict maps of Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines (**FIGURE 1**), and two allegorical drawings. Each stamp is inscribed "A LA PATRIA FRAN-QUEO VOLUNTARIO ESPANOLA 5 CENTIMOS". *Filatelica's* war tax stamps were so popular that *Filatelica* issued six different reprints, except that the stamp imprint (**FIGURE 2**) of the reprints is slightly smaller than the first issue. Each printing was issued in a different color. The five stamps were printed in horizontal rows in setenant

strips of five on the pane, were perforated 14, and were issued with or without gum. There also is a margin description on the pane (e.g., ". . . en la guerra" (**FIGURE 3**)). The size of a full pane of the five stamps is not known

Neither local Spanish town or private war tax stamps are known to have been used in the Philippines. A war tax stamp showing the map of the Philippines is known with an 1899 Spain cancel, confirming its use in Spain. However, it is possible that mail from Spain to the Philippines (e.g., to a Spanish soldier or business) could have had a local Spanish town or Filatelica war tax stamp affixed to the cover. However, I am not aware of any such covers. Such covers would likely be dated from mid-1898 through 1899 (when prisoner of war Spanish soldiers were in the Philippines). These covers would be quite rare. The original issue and six reprints of the Filatelica war tax stamps, which include the stamp depicting the map of the Philippines, are described as follows:

Original (First) Issue: Blue color. 25mm by 28mm stamp imprint size.

Second Issue: Blue color. 23mm by 25.5mm stamp imprint size.

Third Issue: Black color. 23mm by 25.5mm stamp imprint size.

Fourth Issue: Violet-blue color. 23mm by 25.5mm stamp imprint size.

Fifth Issue: Orange-red color. 23mm by 25.5mm stamp imprint size.

Sixth Issue: Bluish-green color. 23mm by 25.5mm stamp imprint size.

Seventh Issue: Yellowish-brown color. 23mm by 25.5mm stamp imprint size.

If anyone has any additional information on these war tax stamps, please contact IPPS or Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20012, donpet4526@aol.com.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

It's getting close.... What is?

The IPPS meeting on August 14, 2004 at the APS
STAMPSHOW in SACRAMENTO, Ca.

The meeting is scheduled for Saturday August 14, 2004, at
1:00 pm in room 303. It will be a perfect time to meeting
other collectors interested in Philippines philately. Bring
something for "show and tell". All are welcome. Please
come and bring your friends.