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THE FIRST MONTH OF ISSUE OF THE 1897 SURCHARGED STAMPS

by *Don Peterson*

In 1897, near the end of the Spanish Period, nine stamps of the 1890-96 issue were surcharged and released in Manila (Scott lists eleven stamps; two were actually released in 1899 - see Peterson, 1986). The exact date of release of the nine stamps, however, is not clear in the philatelic literature.

The majority of catalogues and references merely list the issue date as "1897", or as a "?". Only two references list a month. Harradine (1977) lists it as "?March", and Hanciau (1905) lists it as "June ?".

A review of 1897 covers and used stamps in my collection, auction catalogues, and discussions with other collectors, revealed that the majority of postmark dates occur between October and December 1897. The earliest recorded postmark in my records is August 5, 1897. It occurs on a surcharged stamp in the Nestor Jacob collection in Spain. In my own collection, I have a stamp with a manuscript date on it that reads "8/97".

The total absence of covers or used stamps postmarked prior to August 1897 suggests that these stamps were released soon before. Interestingly, nearly all covers dated between August and December 1897 are affixed with surcharged stamps rather than the previous unsurcharged stamps.

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In my opinion, I believe that the release date of the surcharged stamps in Manila was in late July or on August 1, 1897.

If anyone has any used surcharged stamps or covers, please check for postmark dates prior to August 5, 1897, and report them to Don Peterson, 7408 Alaska Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20012.

REFERENCES

Hanciau, L. "The Postal Issues of the Spanish Colony of the Philippines." Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal. 1905. London.

Harradine, P. Philippine Postage Stamps, Handbook, Section 1, Spanish Period, 1854-1898/99. 1977. London.

Peterson, D. "Scott Numbers 184 and 186 — Two Surcharges That Aren't What They Seem." Philippine Philatelic Society Journal. Vol. IX. No's 3 and 4. April and June Quarters. 1986. London.

FOUR-IN-ONE: THE 5c GREEN ISSUE OF 1892

By Don Peterson



If you have noticed color variations on the 5c green stamps (Scott # 153), it is because the single Scott entry actually represents a combination of four separate issues. Since most of you know I collect and write about "fly-speck" Spanish Philippine philately, it was only a matter of time before I got around to Scott # 153.

The Scott catalogue lists a 5c green issue, and indicates it was issued in 1892. However, Mencaraini (1896), Bartaels et al. (1904), and Palmer (1912), all indicate there were four can be distinguished by considering both color and gum type. Additionally, if one had an entire pane of 100, the sheet margin inscriptions are also different.