

## 1899-1910 Issues with Revolutionary Overprints

Last week we covered the issues from 1899 through the 1910 issues. These were all printed in England by the Bradbury Wilkinson Company and in such huge quantities that they became the stamp of choice by the revolutionary fractions to print their own overprints. By all rights these issues became the foundation of the stamps of the Civil war era from 1913-1916. Today I will try to cover the most common of these overprints and give you the collector a good idea of their impact on the stamps of this period. Regarding the Local overprints, this will need a separate study, due to the complexity of the subject.



*Hermosillo GCM Monogram*

The first newly designed stamps of the revolution were coming from Sonora and the Northern areas of Mexico as early as July 1913, but for today's coverage we will go directly to the earliest examples of the previous issues that received overprints, and we can point to the Postal Directorate of the Constitutionlists that authorized the overprinting of the large rubber hand-stamped 'GCM' monogram that was first used in May 1914 in Hermosillo and the later Veracruz type that was used starting in December 1914. These stamp with their almost universally poorly struck violet overprints are one of the most difficult to ascertain as genuine or bogus. Examples done in the familiar violet are not the only color with others such as magenta, green and black on the Hermosillo issues, but the Veracruz type had only one genuine color used, the violet overprint. Predominantly the 1910 issues were used but some of the Hermosillo type can be found on the postage due issues of 1908.

The genuine Hermosillo type is slightly larger than that of the later Veracruz type, but they do look pretty similar. The first type can fit inside a 20 mm circle and the later type inside a 19 mm circle. The first type has a space between the initial loop of the 'G' and the outer loop, but the second type show no space in this area. On the VCZ type the violet ink appears watery. For further details on telling the genuine from the bogus overprint, consult Follansbee's catalogue from his book "The Stamps of the Mexican Revolution 1913 - 1916". Likewise on the others stamps we will cover, this book will have excellent detailed instructions about many of the overprints and how to determine the validity of the various overprints used. There are over one hundred bogus overprints that have been used on the 'GCM' overprinted stamps, so this is likely the most difficult to determine authenticity of these overprints.



*Gob. Const. overprints. left stamp Genuine overprint.; right stamp bogus overprint.*



*Authentic \$ sign with two bars/ Bogus \$ sign with one bar.*

The next group of overprints done by the Constitutionlist was the typographed "GOBIERNO CONSTITUCIONALISTA" Issues of September 1914. This overprint on the lower denominations is called the "Dollar Mark" due to the small dollar sign between the words. Three types of this exist with the normal and inverted dollar sign, plus the G instead of C in Constitucionalista error. Instead of a Dollar mark, the higher value 50 centavos through the 5 Peso stamps had a small 'v' between the word printed horizontally. Overprinted

examples can be found on the 1899 - 1903 15 and 20 Centavos issues as well as all the 1910 issues. The overprint can also be found on the 1908 Postage Due issues. Many errors can be found on these stamps with Inverted printings and double overprints. Most of these were done for philatelic reasons, with some receiving valid postmarks on philatelic covers. All are scarce with these errors and all are interesting to collect for the specialist.



*Estados Sonora overprint*

In November of 1914, the State of Sonora “Estado [de] Sonora” overprinted much of their existing stock of stamps with the large Monogram ‘ES’. Since there were a number of other printed issues of the Revolution as well as a good number of 1899-1910 issues on hand, the overprint can be found on many different varieties of the stamp used during this period. Scott does not include these scarce issues, likely due to the large number of stamps receiving the overprint. The only issue that was not considered valid was the Coach Seal types and none of them were legitimately overprinted with the “ES” monogram.



*Villa, Carranza and Corbata overprints.*

Almost every collector of Mexico has a number of what we call the “Villa” overprinted issue that was authorized by the “Conventionists” in December of 1914. The first type was printed from December to late January 1915 and the second type was printed in March to July of 1915. The two types were separated by the occupation of Mexico City by the Constitutionalist forces under Obregon. Printed from electrotype plates on a solid 100 image plate, the overprints could be used with one print impression per sheet. The first type plate was produced with a number of flaws, the second type was produced to eliminate most of these faults. The only issues that are considered those done for normal postage are those done from the 1910 issues in a normal configuration. The others we find listed are special printings done to sell to collectors by Postmaster General Hinojosa. Some of the special printings were actually used, because they were still valid for postage, but for the majority held by collectors that had little reason to use them on covers philatelic or not. The unfortunate aspect of this overprint is not all the special issues, but the number of fakes that were done. As a seller of Mexican stamps and buyer of many collections, the genuine stamps are far outnumbered by fake overprints. Whole album pages will be filled with fakes of inverted overprints. Details of how to tell the good from the bad are in Nick Follansbee’s book, and in past weekly messages I have written regarding detecting these fakes.

The next issues to receive an overprint with a small GCM monogram overprint is commonly called the “Carranza” type. Like the Villa overprint named for the famous Pancho Villa, the Carranza overprint was named for another “Conventionist” who at one point became the President of Mexico. Interestingly, the second printing of this overprint was done by the Constitutionlists. Like the Villa overprint, this new overprint also became widely faked, especially in special issues such as inverted or double overprints. These overprints even on the most common stamps should be closely examined. Again, checking with Follansbee’s book is the key to knowing what the tell-tale signs are for determining the validity of the overprint.



*Corbata on Gob Const., Carranza and Villa overprints.*



*G.P. de M. \$2.50 overprint*

The last of the overprints found on the 1899-1910 issues were done on both unoverprinted stamps and those done with the earlier overprints. These overprints are the “Corbata”, or Bowtie, the “Barril”, or Barrel and lastly the “G.P.de M. \$2.50” used on the Postage Due issues. Generally speaking, these are not commonly faked and many of the first two are easy to determine by the crudeness of the fakers work. Like any of the rare issues, buying from a dealer you can trust and MEPSI certificates are helpful in keeping your collection free of fakes and no lose of money buying the bogus items.



*Barril 60ctv/ 2ctv, same on Gob Const.issue*

There is more to the stamps used during the Revolutionary period, so we will cover those in the near future. I stress that not all of these stamps are fakes, many are very easily found at very low prices and the main concern should be directed towards the most expensive items and special printings. Help is out there from Meximail, Nick’s excellent book (now out of print but found around \$150 from time to time) and buying from established dealers of Mexican material.