

Overlooked Issues - Part 7 – The “Anotados”

Today’s message should be the final part covering the 1868 issues with this story about the “Anotado” Issues. If you remember in my past message regarding the need to cover the “Tipo” postal fraud issues, to give the best understanding of what these ‘Anotado’ (Noted) stamps are, We can now talk about the importance of how the “Tipo” issue effected this later issue, the “Anotado’s”. Since Scott lists the “Anotado” issues, but does not list the “Tipo” issue most collectors might think it odd that these overprinted stamps would even make the catalogue as separate listings.

Sometime in late 1871 the discovery of the postal fraud going on right in the Mexican printing office came to light. We know so little about this work to defraud the government of revenues from the sales of bogus stamps that even what I will tell you today may seem sketchy. There was obviously a cover-up by the postal administration about that was happening and the huge loss of revenue due with declining stamp sales when the mail load was not going down. How could this happen that tens of thousands of Pesos were being lost each year in stamps sales? The first connection we have to this postal fraud coming to light when the Postal Officials for the first time were willing to buy back postage they later marked with an overprint ‘Anotado’ which means noted or accounted for.



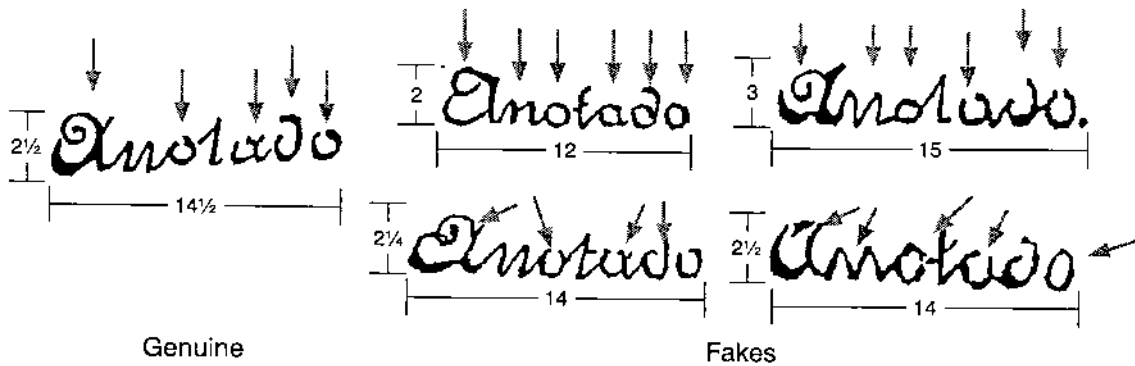
Veracruz 12 centavos Genuine stamp with Anotado Overprint / Guadalajara 25ctv Tipo with Anotado Overprint

Before just invalidating the present issues, which had happened in February of 1872, the postal authorities avoided an uprising by local businesses in Mexico City that had large quantities of these stamps on hand, by offering to accept mint stamps back. Their idea was to get these bogus stamps out of circulation. In reality, the loss was already there and since a good portion of the stamps returned were the bogus stamps, the Post Office wound up paying for these bogus stamps to prevent a lost in carried mail. It may have been the fear that the general public would find out that they had thieves printing stamps right there under their noses that made these odd policy changes. The chief administrator for the Mexican Post Office was dismissed and replaced without any reason given to the public.



Genuine Puebla 25ctv with faked Anotado overprint with wrong cancel dating for Anotado use

Since these stamps were being returned and paid for, at first the postal authorities likely had no intention to put them back in the clerk's drawers for sale, but by doing so, they would at least recoup some of the funds they had laid out to remove the Tipos from the market. In order to prevent a short supply of postage in Mexico City and before the release of the new 1872 issues, the post office started to sell the Anotado issues in March of 1872 until sometime in April the same year. These stamps were not available in any offices outside of Mexico City and all known used copies have the familiar Mexico City cancels. These facts help us determine that stamps with cancels dated in the wrong period or used outside Mexico DF have bogus overprints.



Stout's chart to show the differences between the genuine and bogus Anotado overprints

There is a great deal more written about this interesting subject of postal fraud and the cover-up, so I am suggesting that you read the articles by Roberto Liera in Mexicana, July 1977 and John Heath's article in October 1997 Mexicana on this subject. A good part of the story along with the postal circulars that detail some of the work going on during this period can also be found in the Heath/Stout book on this issue, available from MEPSI at mepsi.org, listed under publications. Not all used or mint copies bearing the Anotado overprint are Tipos, and the prices in Scott do not reflect this, but you will find different value levels in Follansbee's catalogue for these different stamps. You will also find brief coverage of these stamps in his catalogue as well.