

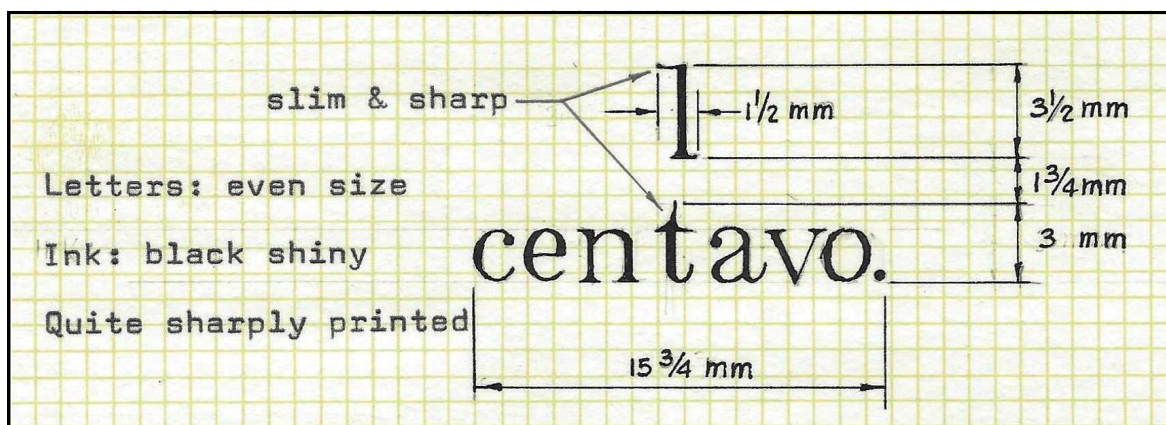
GUATEMALA 1881 FORGERIES AND FAKES SCOTT 17-20

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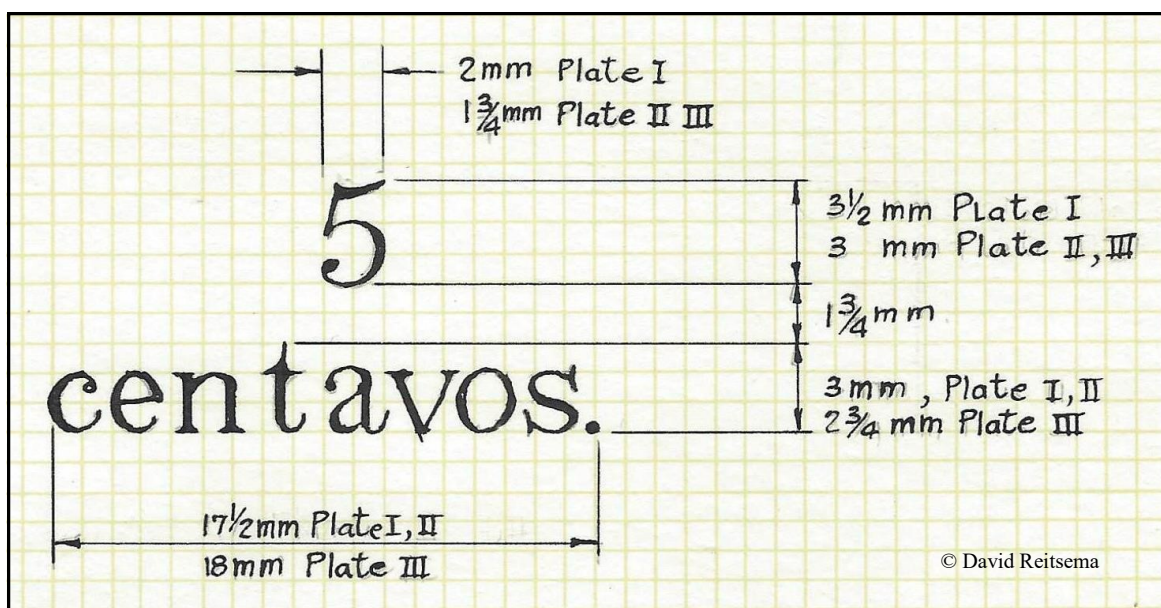
In 1881 four earlier stamp issues were surcharged. The date of issue is unknown, and before the end of the year the unsold postal stock was demonitized and sold to a stamp dealer. The short period of use resulted in large collector demand for this issue and forgers were happy to oblige.

There are forgeries (made to defraud the government), bogus (surcharges on stamps other than the original surcharged stamps) and fakes (made to defraud collectors). Surcharges which are not perfectly horizontal and have blurred or broken type are quick ways to identify some forgeries and fakes. However, the surest method is to measure the surcharges as illustrated here [1].

The figures below show the genuine surcharge measurements, and the general characteristics of each surcharge are illustrated. The numerals and fonts are slim and sharp, letters are uniform in size, and the ink is a shiny black [2].

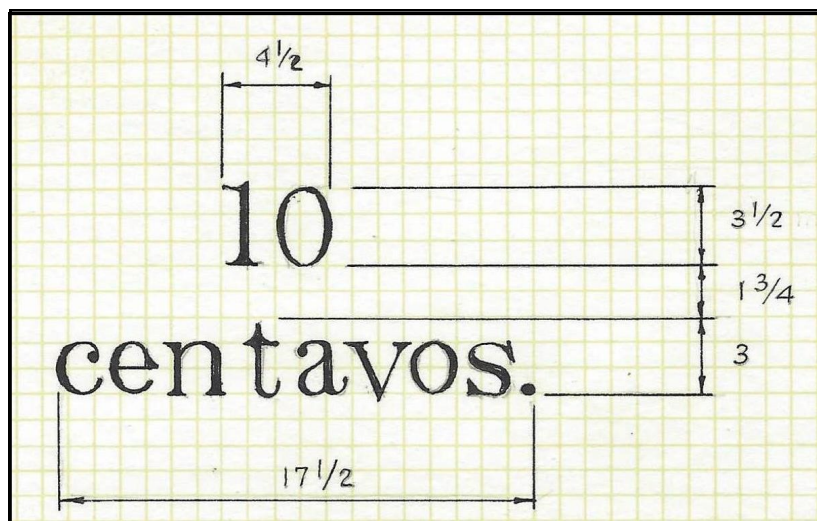


Measurements of Genuine 1c on 1/4r

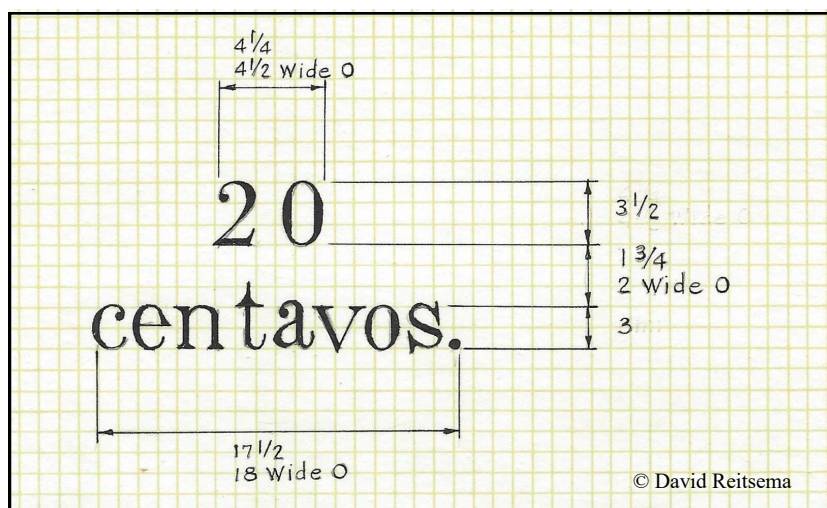


Measurements of Genuine 5c on 1/2r
NOTE: Three plates with differing measurements

Continued on following page



Measurements of Genuine 10c on 1r



Measurements of Genuine 20c on 2r
NOTE: Wide 'O' variety has different dimensions

The five centavos surcharge is the only one of the four which has more than one plate (3) and thus there are minor differences in spacings as indicated on the illustration.

There are over twenty common fakes and bogus examples of these surcharges [2] and some are illustrated here.

Figure 1 shows a bogus 1 centavo surcharge on the 1/2 real stamp. Similar bogus surcharges include a 10c on the 2 reals and on the 4 reals.



Figure 1

Figure 2 illustrates some typical fakes, characterized by blurred type, slanting surcharges, surcharges partially obliterated by heavy cancels and unevenly inking [3].



Figure 2 - Typical Fake Surcharges

References:

- [1] The illustrations are the author's; other sources illustrating the measurements could not be located. For measurements of genuine, see Goodman, Roland A., ed., *Guatemala 1*, p. 106, Robson Lowe, Ltd., London (1969).
- [2] Goodman, *op. cit.* p. 93-107.
- [3] Jickling, David L., "Detecting Fakes Among The Classic Issues", *El Quetzal*, Vol. 44, No. 280, pp. 90-4, International Society of Guatemala Collectors (1994).

The International Society of Guatemala Collectors was formed in 1948 and is Affiliate No. 38 of the American Philatelic Society. The Society is committed to assisting everyone interested in collecting Guatemala. Its award winning journal El Quetzal is published quarterly. Membership levels include a US\$10 online membership which includes access to most society publications including its two award winning handbooks, and the electronic version of the journal. If you collect Guatemala you will find much more information available on the society website:

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