

Spanish Mariana Islands

A single issue of six overprinted stamps comprise the entire philatelic output of the Spanish Mariana Islands. Under Spanish control and administration the stamps of the Philippine Islands were utilized prior to 1899 when the islands, with the exception of Guam, were sold to Germany. Guam, one of the islands in the group of fourteen islands, had already been captured by the United States on June 20, 1898.

In September, 1899 six different denominations of the then current Philippine Islands issue of 1898 were overprinted locally. The overprint consisted of a boxed handstamp that included the words "Marianas Espanolas" in the center. Each stamp was individually struck with the overprint in a vertical position. The normal overprint placement has the words reading down. The inverted placement resulted in the words reading up.

These stamps were available for usage on only a single mail that was transported off the islands before the sale of the islands to Germany. That single mail left the island of Saipan at the beginning of December, 1899 and arrived in Manila, Philippines on December 11, 1899. Mail processed from that sailing received the datestamp of the United States Military Station Number 1, Manila, Philippine Islands, Received, dated December 11, 1899 upon arrival.

This exhibit begins with a few representative examples of Philippine Island stamps used from the Marianas including one of the four reported certified covers. The balance of the exhibit is devoted to a study of the 1899 overprints. Included are mint singles, mint blocks and usages on cover. The highlight is a block of the six centavos of which only three remain intact from a total issuance of only fifty stamps. Eight covers handled on the single sailing off the island are shown. All of the material shown is scarce to rare. It is estimated that there are fewer than twenty covers reported bearing the overprint issue.

Philippine Islands Used in the Mariana Islands

Earliest Reported Franked Cover Used From The Marianas



September 1877 Marianas certified to Manila, manuscript "Marianas" origin
2r Spanish Dependencies plus pair Philippines 2c, "CERTIF" boxed cancel

Philippine Islands Used in the Mariana Islands

1884 Certified Cover



17 November 1884 Marianas certified to Manila
25c 1882 issue with "CERTIF" boxed cancel on front
strip of five 2 4/8c 1882 issue tied to verso by oval of squares cancel
manuscript received notation

One Of Four Reported Certified Usages

Philippine Islands Used in the Mariana Islands

1877 Issue



four copies 2c used on newspaper wrapper front to Germany
Marianas straight line postmark

1898 Issue



5c block of four
Marianas Arms cancel



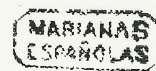
2c and 8c tied to piece
Marianas Arms cancel



15c tied to piece
Marianas Arms cancel

1899 Overprints

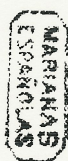
Unused



2 centavos
500 issued



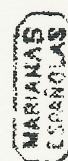
3 centavos
500 issued



normal



5 centavos
overprint inverted
500 issued



inverted



6 centavos
50 issued



8 centavos
700 issued



15 centavos
150 issued

These stamps were overprinted locally on the island of Saipan. The ink used ranged from a watery blackish violet to a blue violet. The normal overprint reads down while the inverted overprint reads up. On the five centavos value the inverted overprint is as often found as the normal overprint. The inverted overprint is much scarcer on the other values.

1899 Overprints

Unused

2 centavos



inverted overprint



3 centavos



cross gutter pair



top stamp inverted overprint

1899 Overprints

Unused

5 centavos



bottom left stamp
inverted overprint



all but top right stamp
inverted overprints

6 centavos



bottom left stamp
inverted overprint

Three Reported Blocks

1899 Overprints

Unused

8 centavos



inverted overprints



15 centavos



1899 Overprints

Used



2c inverted overprint at right



3c pair



5c inverted



5c inverted overprints



8c pair



15c pair



3c strip



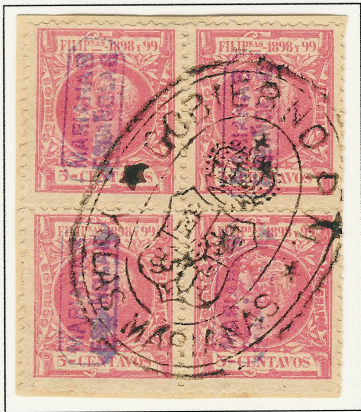
15c strip



2c block



3c block



5c block all inverted overprints



8c block

1899 Overprints

Two Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, Philippines

2c and 3c pairs paying double 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp

1899 Overprints

Two Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, 2c and 3c singles paying 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp



Marianas to Manila, 2c and 8c singles paying double 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp

1899 Overprints

Three Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, Philippines

pair 3c and two copies 2c paying double 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival

1899 Overprints

Five Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, 5c single paying 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp



24 October 1899 Marianas to Manila, four copies 5c paying 20c rate, **two inverted overprints**

Origin postmark and Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp

1899 Overprints

Five Centavos On Registered Cover



Marianas registered to Manila, Philippines

2c, 3c and 5c singles paying registry fee plus 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 **Registered** arrival backstamp

1899 Overprints

Six Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, 6c used with 2c and 8c paying 10c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp

Three Reported Examples Of Six Centavos On Cover

1899 Overprints

Eight Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, Philippines

Two copies 8c and two copies 2c paying quadruple 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp

1899 Overprints

Fifteen Centavos On Cover



Marianas to Manila, Philippines

single 15c paying triple 5c rate

Gobierno PM Ylas Marianas Arms cancel

11 December 1899 United States Military Station No. 1 arrival backstamp

Three Reported Examples Of Fifteen Centavos On Cover

Philippine Islands Used in the Mariana Islands

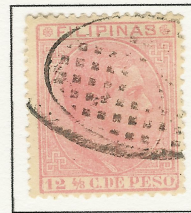
Distinctive Oval Of Squares Cancel



1877 Issue
10 centavos



1882 Issue
2 4/8 centavos



1882 Issue
12 4/8 centavos

Ysla De Saipan Crowned Oval



1877 Issue
2 centavos



1877 Issue
15 centavos

Ysla De Rota Crowned Oval



1877 Issue
6 and 8 centavos