



PORTE DE MAR STAMPS OF MEXICO 1875 TO 1879

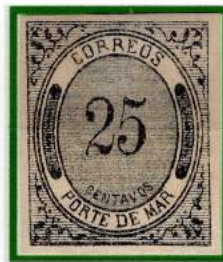
WHAT WERE THEY: Porte de Mar stamps were used by the Mexican Postal Service from 1875 to 1879. Their purposes were 1) to compensate packet ships for carrying mail to foreign ports, 2) to allow postal patrons to prepay maritime postage fees, and 3) to provide visible evidence that these fees had been paid. Three sets of stamps were produced between 1875 and 1879, and there are two types of stamps in the second set. Only the second set (IIA and IIB) was put into service. The first set was not issued because the Postmaster General did not like the design, and in 1879 Mexico joined the UPU and issued regular stamps for foreign mail, rendering Issue III unnecessary.



Issue I: Not Issued
Unlisted



Issue IIA: Small
Numerals (JX9-19)



Issue IIB: Larger
Numerals (JX20-25)



Issue III: Not Issued:
(JX26-31)

WHY WERE THEY NEEDED: The Mexican Postal Service had to rely on foreign ships, chiefly British, French and American packets, to carry mail to foreign countries. In many cases the packet services were not paid for mail carriage, particularly if the ultimate destination was a third country. In January 1875, the British and French packet services announced that their ships would only carry mail destined for their home countries, unless the sea postage was paid in advance by the Mexican Postal Service.

The Porte de Mar system was designed to ensure that the postal patron paid for maritime transport, since Mexican postage stamps only paid for carriage to the port. Initially there were no Porte de Mar stamps - the postal customer simply paid an additional fee - but the public disliked paying these charges without any proof of payment, so Porte de Mar stamps were introduced in May of 1875.

HOW THEY WERE USED: At the time of mailing, Porte de Mar stamps were placed by the postal clerks on the backs of letters in an amount equal to the required overseas postage. Maritime mail was then sent to the Gulf Coast port of Veracruz and put on foreign ships. The total value of the Porte de Mar stamps in each ship's mail packet was calculated and that amount was paid to the captain (or his agent) for carrying the mail. Arrangements were made with both English and French packet ships, and since the rates were different, the postal patron had to specify which service was to be used, at the time of mailing.

These stamps were not sold to the public. However early stamp albums provided spaces for them, so the resultant philatelic demand resulted in many forgeries which are an integral part of this exhibit.

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