

Haiti's 1914 GL O.Z. Leconte Stamps



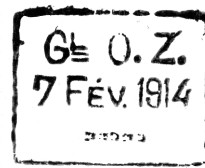
1c de gourde
Type 1,
reading up.



Type 1



2c de gourde
Type 2,
reading down.



Type 2



5c de piastre
Type 2,
reading down.

History: A single frame or multi-frame of Haiti's 1914 GL O.Z. Leconte issue has never been previously presented at the National or International level.

Aim: (see Title Page)

Challenge Factor: Holistically a better collection does not exist. If one uses the *Sellers Collection* as a standard, it is evident that this exhibit includes more items of a special nature than it lacks. Numerous items are the *only known example* or *very rare* which makes replication impossible. The *Sellers Collection* (1974) included only 5 covers (only one with a 1914 postmark - one 1c de g gourde cover, one 2c de gourde cover and three 5c de piastre covers. The number of varieties in the *Sellers Coll.* was limited to five examples, far fewer in variety and number than in this exhibit.

As is the case with earlier issues, a collector will seldom find a stamp or cover free of all flaws or defects. This is especially true for covers which remained in Haiti for any length of time because of the country's hot and humid tropical climate.

Background: As the overprints were applied by hand, rather than letterpress, they can vary considerably in appearance. For this reason multiple examples of the same stamp are included.

One of the two types of overprint were applied to 150,000 of the 1c de gourde stamps; 100,000 of the 2c de gourde stamps; and 100,000 of the 5c de piastre stamps. It is not known specifically how many had a type 1 or type 2 overprint applied. As these stamps are vertical in format, the overprint was intended to be applied vertically, reading up or down.

Oreste Zamor's tenure was brief and ended October 20, 1914 when he was deposed by revolution. The stamps with the GL O.Z. overprints continued to be used until April 1920 when the Allegory of Agriculture & Commerce series, was released.

Rarity scale: (see Title Page).

Highlights:

- Earliest known use of each value on cover;
- 12 rare - very rare overprint varieties, three of which were not listed by Montès (1954);
- Rare - very rare inter-town and intra-town covers with frankings of 1c de g, 2c de g, 7c de g and 9c de g.
- Only known example of a postal card posted during Zamor's tenure without a GL O.Z. overprint on the indicia.

Research/Findings: The exhibitor has specialized in collecting the stamps of Haiti since 1975. As a result he has had the opportunity to know the best collectors and to have been privileged to view their collections in their homes, as well as at national or international exhibitions. In order to determine rarity, the exhibitor has made it a habit to inquire of knowledgeable collectors whether certain items are present in their collection, regularly visited stamp shops, bourses at national and international exhibitions, and perused auction catalogs.

Despite approximately 2,000,000 stamps overprinted in 1914 with GL O.Z. overprints, little except in a general way, has been written. In 2023, the exhibitor authored a series of articles in *Haiti Philately* which addressed GL O.Z. overprints for the first time enabling collectors to recognize genuine overprints and forgeries. Part IV cataloged different overprint varieties (see references).

Until today catalogs have misled collectors by illustrating only one type of overprint when there are two. Only a few years ago was an accurate representation of one of the two overprints illustrated. Previously, the catalog illustration hardly resembled either of the genuine overprints. How then was a collector to determine whether a stamp is genuine or not?

Numerous forgeries of different types of the 1902 provisional have caused collectors think that this is also true for stamps with GL O.Z. overprints. In the case of the 1902 provisional overprints, most varieties are forgeries. This has in large part been responsible for suppressing the catalog value of normal stamps and more so the price of overprint varieties.

Only one type of GL O.Z. forgery for the Leconte issue was included in the *Sellers Collection* (v. 11, p. 8). It

is a 2c de g deep orange a vertical pair and a block of 9 (3x3) with overprints reading down on both. An example is included in this exhibit. It is not common and is easily recognizable. This type has been found more on stamps that are not cataloged with GL O.Z. overprints (i.e. the 1904 Centenary issue).

Although the number of stamps with a type 1 and type 2 stamps of a particular stamp are not recorded, it is evident that each value did not have type 1 and type 2 overprints applied equally. Some types on certain stamps are quite scarce. The 1c de gourde with type 2 overprint reading up and the 2c type 2 reading up are not included in this exhibit which suggests that examples are rare, very rare or do not exist. This also is true the different types of varieties and the number of each found on different values of each series of the 1906-13 series. Some types of varieties on the Leconte issue are not known and others very rare.

Blocks of four of GL O.Z. Leconte stamps are scarce. If not, four different blocks of four would be exhibited for each value - two for each type with one showing the overprint reading up and the other reading down. The Sellers Collection did not include any.

As the overprint was applied by hand, it is not surprising how varieties such as inverted or double overprints came to be. Multiples of Leconte issue with overprint varieties, as with the 1906-13 issue are considered rare - very rare, with Leconte issue considered more so. An example of a 2c de gourde with a double overprint, one reading up and one down (type 2), not listed by Montès (1954), is included in this exhibit.

GL O.Z. varieties were not in the exhibitor's opinion deliberately created. The misconception came about because the US Marines who did the surcharging of GL O.Z. stamps were not attentive to how the overprints were applied and did so carelessly (Dalsimer, 1962).

The Leconte stamps with GL O.Z. overprints were never surcharged as were many other stamps with GL OZ overprints. A large number of many different stamps with and without GL O.Z. overprints were surcharged 1915-1920. This clearly indicates that in 1914 not all stamps had GL O.Z. overprints applied.

Only one cover is known without a GL O.Z. overprinted stamp postmarked before Oreste Zamor's was deposed Oct. 20, 1914. This cover, in the writer's collection, is not included in this exhibit as it is franked with a 4c carmine type 1 GL OZ overprint. This exhibit, however, includes a 2c de piastre postal card postmarked July 15, 1914 without an overprint on the indicia. Alongside is a 1c GL O.Z. Leconte stamp. It is the only known example. It is to be noted that postal cards of the ABNC 1898-99 and the 1906 series never had GL O.Z., overprints applied. In contrast, ABNC postal cards of 1898-99 had 1902 provisional overprints applied.

The period of use of GL O.Z. overprinted stamps extends from 1914 when the stamps were overprinted until April 1920 when the Allegory & Commerce series was released. This exhibit includes many more examples of early use, than examples of late use.

It is paradoxical that 1914-1920 internal or domestic covers franked with 1c and 2c de gourde stamps are in most cases rare or even very rare. There evidently was much mail as the supply of these values was often depleted and as an expediency 1c and 2c surcharges were applied to less often used high values. Few domestic covers survived because few in Haiti were interested in preserving postal history. Other significant factors include Haiti's hot and humid tropical climate, frequent fires, revolutions, earthquakes, etc. which resulted in the destruction of correspondence files.

Covers with cancels other than Port-au-Prince or Cap-Haitien are more often encountered before the US occupation began in 1915. This can be explained by the fact that in an effort to limit smuggling ports such as Jacmel, Cayes, etc. were no longer a legal entry points for cargo and the commercial importance of these towns diminished considerably with a corresponding decrease of business correspondence.

Town cancels are more often found on stamps denominated in centimes de gourde, rather than centimes de piastre, because these were the stamps required for intra-town or inter-town mail from 1881-1919. For reasons explained town cancels of domestic or internal covers for this issue are rare - very rare.

While this exhibit answers many questions, many still remain unanswered. Hopefully, the accumulation of more data and research will provide answers.

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