

## MEXICAN REVOLUTION - OVERPRINTS ... its context

What is the historical context of each of the overprints used in the Mexican Revolution?

These overprints are presented in chronological order.

(This series of articles does not include overprints known as local or rubber) ( i )

### “VICTORIA DE TORREÓN” (a)



Fig. 1

Start date: April 3, **1914** (b)

Place of issue: Cd. Juárez, Chihuahua

### SERIES OVERPRINTED WITH “VICTORIA DE TORREON”



Fig. 2

Transitorio 10c

These images are just one example from each participating series.

Overprinted denominations (the colored ones), of each participating series  
See the meaning of each color at the bottom of this table

Serie	Denomination										
	1c	2c	3c	5c	10c	15c	20c	50c	1p	5p	
Águilas 1899											
Águilas 1903											
Complementario 1908											
Independencia 1910											
Ejércitos 1913											
Transitorios 1914	1c	2c	4c	5c	10c	20c	50c	1p			
Denver 1914											

	Without color, it was NOT over-printed
	Identified postal use (c)
	Special philatelic issue (d)
	False or undocumented (e)

## TIMELINE OF ITS ISSUE

Maderismo	Against the Usurper	Factional Struggle	Legal Consolidation
Nov/20/1910 - Feb/22/1913	Feb/23/1913 - Jul/15/1914	Jul/16/1914 - Oct/12/1915	Oct/13/1915- May/20/1920

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The city of Torreón, in the southwest of the state of Coahuila, was a strategic point during the armed struggle of the Mexican Civil War because it was a railway hub, and troops, weapons, provisions, heavy equipment, etc., were transported by rail. The **Mexican Central Railroad**, which ran from Mexico City to Ciudad Juárez and had several branches, including the one that went from Gómez Palacio (a town immediately adjacent to Torreón) in the state of Durango to the port of Tampico, Tamaulipas, passing through Monterrey, Nuevo León, and the **International Railroad**, which ran from Piedras Negras, Coahuila (Ciudad Porfirio Díaz from 1888-1911), a border town with the U.S. state of Texas, to the city of Durango, capital of the state of the same name, **converged in Torreón**.

In the **second phase of the Mexican Civil War**, all the groups that had participated in the Madero Period united to overthrow the usurper Victoriano Huerta, who had assumed the presidency after the assassination of President Madero and Vice President Pino Suárez. In the north of the country, Francisco Villa and his División del Norte (Northern Division) had occupied the city of Torreón and the entire Comarca Lagunera region (Matamoros and San Pedro in Coahuila, and Gómez Palacio and Lerdo in Durango) for several months, from October to December 1913, when the federals (loyal to Huerta) recaptured the city. General Francisco Villa was determined to retake Torreón; by early 1914, he had General Felipe Ángeles, an artillery expert, in his army, along with his elite group of generals from the División del Norte. By that time, the División del Norte was a highly respected army with 50,000 troops. Villa's first movements in the area surrounding Torreón began in March 1914. The fighting began on March 22 and lasted 11 days; the Villistas prevailed with **force and strategy**, and the Huertistas fled, abandoning the city during the night of **April 2, 1914**.

On April 3, in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Postmaster Ponciano Cota ordered that stamps from the Transitory Series be overmarked with the inscription "**Victoria de Torreón, Abril 2-1914**." This was **the first overprint in the philatelic period known as the Civil War**. It was issued to celebrate, before a gathering of revolutionary leaders in the city, the resounding victory of the Northern Division over the federal troops the previous day in the Comarca Lagunera region. It is known that the printing was done in El Paso, Texas (on the immediate border with Ciudad Juárez) by Ellis Brothers Printing Co., and it is black; only a few overprinted stamps were sold at face value at the post office, mainly to collectors and philatelic dealers. There are known uses of these stamps in northern Mexico and on the revolutionary railroads. It is said that after this single issue, the printing plates were destroyed.

By April 14, Villa's forces had seized San Pedro de las Colonias, defeating the best federal generals. Generals Marcelo Caraveo and Joaquín Mass, loyal to Huerta, approached Villa, attempting to divide the revolutionaries and appealing to his patriotism, they proposed that he join the federal forces solely to expel the Americans who had invaded the port of Veracruz on March 21 of that year; although Villa rejected the Americans invasion, he refused to ally with them. By May 20, with the capture of Saltillo, the capital of Coahuila, northern Mexico was in the hands of the revolutionaries. The fall of Victoriano Huerta was a matter of months.

**CUMULATIVE CHART OF ALL OVERPRINTS (f)**

Overprint (h)			Overprinted Postal Series (I) = valid postally, (II) = Philatelic, (III) False						
Nickname (a,h)	Date (b)	Image (g)	Águilas 1899	Águilas 1903	Comple- mentarios 1908	Independ- encia 1910	Ejércitos 1913	Transi- torios 1914	Denver 1914
Victoria de Torreón	Apr 3, 1914							(I)	
GCM grande									
Dollar Sign \$									
Estado Sonora									
Monograma Villa									
Villa / \$									
Monograma Carranza									
Carranza / \$									
Corbata									
Corbata / \$									
Corbata / Carranza									
Corbata / Villa									
Barril									
Barril / \$									
Barril / Villa									
Barril / Carranza									
\$2.50									

**Philatelic notes:**

- (a) Name or nickname by which philatelists refer to them.
- (b) Date on which philatelists have documented its first known use (circulated piece).
- (c) Circulated postal items are known.
- (d) They were printed within the official workshops, under orders from higher authorities, but were not made available for sale to the general public at post offices; they were intended for direct sale to philatelists. The examples known to have been used are believed to have been caused by the philatelists themselves.
- (e) The pieces exist, but there are no genuinely considered postal uses.
- (f) It will be added with each publication of this series of articles.
- (g) The image size does not correspond to the actual size of the overprint.
- (h) In the case of "Barril" and "2.50", technically the correct term is "Surcharge" rather than "Overprint", because these overprint modify the face value of the stamp.
- (i) "Local" or "Rubber" overprints are those printed in some towns and cities that were conquered by a particular faction, and were only used locally. The device was usually made of rubber, hence the name "Rubber."

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