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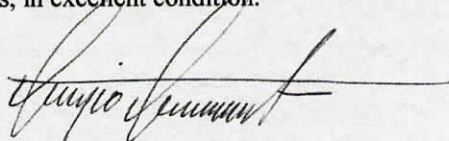
Syracuse, New York, 2012.06.06.

ETHIOPIA, 1896.

I have examined the six cards bearing each eight impressions of postage stamps of Ethiopia, "Menelik II" ¼ guerche green, ½ guerche salmon, 1 guerche blue, 2 guerche brown, 4 guerche red-brown, and 8 guerche mauve, each impression overprinted in black in small *sans-serif* letters "SPECIMEN", the cards being off-white, of 200 x 136 mm dimensions, and thickness of 0.132 mm, related to Higgins & Gage # 1-3, a colour reproduction of which is on the reverse side of this certificate, reduced to 35% of true size, and I am of the opinion that:

The six 'Specimen' cards submitted are **genuine in all respects**. The Ethiopian Post, represented by Leon Chefnieux (a trusted French agent for Menelik II), decided to supplement the issue of postage stamps with an issue of postal stationery, which would include inscriptions and denomination in Roman characters to better meet Universal Postal Union requirements. The project was entrusted to the Atelier de Fabrication de Timbres-Poste, in Paris, and the already successful artist and engraver E. Mouchon was placed in charge of design and production. The design, using elements of the postage stamps issued, and elements similar to those utilized for the Greek Olympic Series of the same year, showing Menelik II facing to the right, was approved. In the absence of clear instructions, a set of seven denominations sharing the basic design was prepared: 1/4g, 1/2g, 1g, 2g, 4g, 8g, and 16g. Samples were prepared printed directly from the dies (a set of die proofs exists). These six cards, bearing each eight typographed impressions, and overprinted 'Specimen' were printed by the Atelier as normal part of the production of the postal cards (I am not aware of any similar card bearing the 16 guerche stamp). Eventually the three lowest denominations were issued and part of the stock sent to Addis Ababa (1/4g for local postcards, 1/2g for internal postcards, and 1g for foreign postcards), while the higher four denominations were not produced. A rare set of archival proofs and specimens, in excellent condition.

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