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THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI

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Foreword

"Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence with vizor'd falsehood, and base forgery" (Milton)

THE MAIN PURPOSE of this work is to place on record a detailed analysis of every known stamp that has received the unwelcome but skilful attention of Jean de Sperati.

It is believed that all such imitations are recorded in this volume, but as Sperati's operations covered a period of some forty years—the last ten quite openly—it is impossible to make a positive pronouncement.

Sperati's work was known many years ago and first recognized in this country about 1930. During the next few years a record was made of the stamps reproduced by Sperati and photographs were sent to prominent dealers in the capital cities of Austria, France and Germany. However, no description of these dangerous reproductions was allowed to reach collectors and, in consequence for twenty years or more, the unscrupulous have been able to traffic in these reproductions at the expense of the collecting public.

Sperati was first charged by the French authorities with breaking the law on 30th November, 1942, and subsequent litigation did not terminate until 5th July, 1952. The result of this litigation was a suspended prison sentence and a substantial fine. The result of these cases in no way prevented the reproduction of postage stamps by Sperati. In fact he was in a stronger position in 1952 than he had been ten years earlier, as the publicity received from these lawsuits only resulted in a large number of people requiring specimens of his work for legitimate research purposes or with a view to defrauding collectors.

The Expert Committee of The British Philatelic Association, a national body formed by prominent amateur and professional philatelists to promote the hobby and protect collectors against fraud, naturally took a keen interest in Sperati's work. For fifty years London has been the greatest market in the world for rare postage stamps and, in the course of time, it was inevitable that Sperati's reproductions would reach this country in a quantity that could prove a great danger to the hobby and such examples as have been procured were carefully studied.

In 1953 it was learned that Sperati's advancing years and failing sight were a handicap to the continuance of his business and he was looking for a successor who would buy his stocks and to whom his craft could be taught. That this business should continue would have been in the worst interests of the hobby and the Council of The British Philatelic Association, with the co-operation of various authorities in this country, succeeded in coming to an arrangement by which Sperati's stock of reproductions, his reference collections and the cliché from which they were made, came under the control. In addition the copyright of the various Sperati formulae was also acquired. As a result of the examination of this stock and the clichés, it has been discovered that the scope of Sperati's work was very much greater than had been anticipated and, in consequence, the task of sorting the evidence has taken some months longer than originally planned. The text and illustrations in this work are sufficient evidence of the labour that has been involved.

Many of Sperati's clichés were dated and on some were records of the special orders that he had filled for both professional and amateur philatelists. This revealed his reproductions in a new light, for it had not occurred to any member of the Council of the B.P.A. that a collector desiring to complete a specialized study would have his wants manufactured for him.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The second edition of this work comprises two parts—

I The Text

II The Plates

The text has been prepared by members of the Expert Committee of the British Philatelic Association and their staffs. Generous assistance has been given by a number of members of the British Philatelic Association and the Royal Philatelic Society, many of whom supplied reference material of great value in order that the specific tests might be as accurate as possible.

It is believed that this work contains a description of every stamp imitated by Jean de Sperati but should the reader know of any other, then the information would be welcomed by the Expert Committee of the British Philatelic Association.

THE

BRITISH PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION

WAS FOUNDED IN 1926

to promote the hobby of philately

AND

to protect philatelists

THERE ARE FOUR CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP:

Collectors

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BRITISH POST OFFICES IN THE LEVANT

PLATE 2

In Sperati's reference collection there were two impressions of the oval date stamp

REGISTERED
A
14 AP 10
SMYRNA

As will be seen from the illustrations, retouching has made these impressions appear to be from different handstamps although they were originally from one.

Note the dropped "0" in the year in the second impression.

The B.P.A. Expert Committee is not aware of the purpose for which these impressions were made by Sperati.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

PLATE 4

1883 FIVE SHILLINGS

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in black and in colour, as well as unused and used reproductions on genuine paper. The cliché is dated 1st November 1951.

For comparison use the genuine stamp.

	GENUINE	SPERATI
PRINTING	*Typography*	*Photo-lithography*
COLOUR DL	*Orange*	*Golden orange, or more rarely, dull orange*
PAPER DL	*Smooth surface*	*Rough surface*
PAPER MVL	*Chalky-white*	*Badly stained on back*
PERFORATION	*14 comb*	*Genuine*
WATERMARK	*Crown over CA*	*Genuine*
GUM	*Colourless*	*Colourless*
IMPRESSION	*Clear and bright*	*Coarse and too full of colour*

BASIC TESTS: *B, D, E, F, G and K.*

SPECIFIC TESTS

(i) There is a constant colourless spot before the "C" of "CAPE" (Plate 4).

(ii) The background projects below the "AP" of "CAPE" (Plate 4).

(iii) The top horizontal line of shading is broken below the "P" of "CAPE," and again under the "E" of "HOPE" (Plate 4).

(iv) There is a dot above the "E" of "FIVE" and between the frame line and the leaf. (*Note*—This is constant on the golden shades but has been touched out on the dull orange.)

(v) There is a constant colourless spot in the lower loop of the "S" of "POSTAGE."

(vi) The "N" of "SHILLINGS" is more prominent than the other letters.

CANCELLATIONS

1. "Squared" circle containing "PORT E(LIZA)BETH/H/JY 28/83/CAPE-COLONY."
2. "Squared" circle containing "(PORT ELI)ZABETH/H/DE 12/83/CAPE-COLONY."
3. "Squared" circle containing "(GRAHA)M's-TOWN/E/.E 2/84/ "(CAPE-COL)ONY."
4. Circle containing "(PORT ELIZ)ABETH/—/—9/—/ (CAPE COL)ONY"
5. Circle containing "..ARI/C/DE 10/84"
6. Part of an oval of bars.
7. Cancellation of bars containing numeral "2".
8. As 7 but a different type.

reproductions were offered and during the following year six further supplements, each containing six reproductions, were "published." In 1953, two supplements, each of six stamps, appeared.

Those who chose to buy these 281 items paid somewhere between £600 and £700 for a set. In this volume, the number of reproductions recorded is 566—over twice the number sold in his collections with their supplements.

Of the items in the collections, considerable quantities were printed, in a few instances as many as five hundred copies. On the other hand, of some reproductions only one or two examples are known, the stock (such as it was) having been absorbed in collections many years ago. From the records available, it would appear likely that Sperati made between 50,000 to 70,000 examples of his "works-of art."

BRITISH EMPIRE

	Different reproductions	First recorded and where	Livre d'Or	Cancellations	Described in Chapter
Australia 1913 £2	1	1951	VI	—	V
Bahamas 1884 £1	1	E	I	—	V
,, 1902 £1	1	E	—	—	V
Barbados 1886 5/-	1	E	—	L1	V
Bermuda 1882 1/- (see Gibraltar)	—	—	—	—	V
British Columbia 1865 5c.	1	1942	A	—	V
,, ,, 10c.	1	1953	VII	—	V
,, ,, ,, 1890/94 4As.	1	E	—	L1	V
British East Africa 1890/94 4As.	1	E	—	—	V
,, ,, ,, 8As.	1	E	—	—	V
,, ,, ,, 1R.	1	1944	—	—	V
British Honduras 1885 6d.	1	H	—	—	V
,, ,, ,, 1/-	—	—	—	—	V
British P.O.s in the Levant	1	1951	B	—	V
Cape 1883 CA 5/-	1	H	—	—	V
Ceylon 1883 4c. rosy-mauve	1	H	—	—	V
,, ,, 16c.	1	H	—	—	V
,, ,, 24c.	1	H	A	L1	V
,, 1885 5c. on 4c.	1	H	—	—	V
,, ,, 5c. on 24c.	1	H	—	L1	V
,, 1888/89 2c. on 4c.	1	H	—	L1	V
,, ,, 2c. on 4c.	1	H	—	L1	V
,, ,, 2c. on 4c.	1	E	—	—	V
Cyprus 1894 45p.	1	1913	—	—	V
,, 1903 9p.	1	1911	—	—	V
,, ,, 18p.	2	E	B	—	V
,, ,, 45p.					

				G	F7	V
					F7	V
				—		V
				—		V
					F4	V
					F4	V
				—		V
					F3	V
					F3	V
					F2	V
				—		V
					F2	V
					F8	V
				—		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G		V
				G	F3	V
				G	F3	V
				G		V

In the table given above the following code letters and abbreviations are used:—

A = Represented in Sperati's first collection, completed 1947.
B = Represented in Sperati's second collection, completed 1
E = Probably made prior to 1930.
H = Probably made 1930-1939.
J = Probably made 1940-1953.
L = Represented in the *Livre d'Or*.
X = Included the 1942 selection seized by the Customs Authorities.
I = Included in Sperati's first supplement.
II = Second supplement, and so on.

A year date signifies that the reproduction is known to have been on sale or printed in that year.
In the cancellation column—*G*=Genuine, *F*=Forgery, and the subsequent numeral indicates the number of different types of cancell

PLATE 21

1893 ONE SHILLING

Tonga— *contd.*

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in colour, and in all probability made unused reproductions on genuine paper.

SPECIFIC TESTS:

(i) The horizontal shading is weaker, particularly in the top corners.

(ii) The top frame-line appears to be retouched at left and for a short space on the right, caused by the second line of horizontal shading merging with the frame-line.

TRANSVAAL

PLATE 20

1900 FIVE POUNDS

Sperati is known to have made unused reproductions on genuine paper with the genuine overprint. The P.A. Committee have only had one example to examine so they are unable to establish whether all the ecific tests are constant.

Comparison is best made with a "specimen" copy of the issued stamp.

	GENUINE	SPERATI
INTING	*Typography*	*Photo-lithography*
LOUR DL	*Deep bright green*	*Deep green*
LOUR MVL	*Deep blue-green, almost black*	*Deep green*
PER DL	*White*	*Yellowish toned*
PER MVL	*On greenish front white back*	*On yellowish back and front*
FORATION	$12\frac{1}{2}$, *line*	*Genuine*
RESSION	*Bright and clear*	*Flat*

C TESTS: *B, D, E and K.*

SPECIFIC TESTS

The reversed "L" which contains the figure "5" in the orth-west corner is not square cut at the left of the ase line (Plate 20).

(ii) A hair line runs through the vertical stroke of the "T" and touches the right of the "S" of "POSTZEGEL" and continues vertically downwards into the "R" of "REPUBLIEK."

(iii) There is a white spot immediately under the lower bulge of the "B" of "REPUBLIEK" and another in the upper half of the second "E" of "POSTZEGEL."

UGANDA

PLATE 21

1896 FIVE RUPEES

rati is known to have made "die" proofs in black and probably made unused reproductions on paper r to the genuine

sheet position of the genuine stamp imitated is No. 5 i.e. the first stamp on the second row. Position sily be identified as there are no printer's rules on the left side (constant on positions 1, 5, 9 and 13), " of "PROTECTORATE" is raised and the rule that forms the frame-line between Nos. 5 and 9 is bent vards at the left (constant on position 5).

pare with the genuine.

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THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI

Part II

The Plates

1955
BRITISH PHILATELIC ASSOCIATION
3 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1.
ENGLAND

THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLATES

Following plates numbered 1 to 143 will be found nine plates lettered A to J. These following descriptions may be found of use.

Plate

A A portrait of Jean de Sperati, taken in his seventieth year.

B The approval sheet addressed to Portugal by Sperati in 1942, which was discovered and siezed by the Customs authorities in France. The subsequent proceedings at the Court at Chambéry are described in Chapter II.

C Five Italian date-stamps and two firm's cachets of which negatives were found in Sperati's records. No instance of the use of these is known to the B.P.A., but they were probably used by Sperati to make covers for the first issue of Sardinia.

A cancellation—numeral 4—similar to types found on the first issues of Belgium and of Schleswig-Holstein. It is not recorded that Sperati ever attempted to imitate these stamps and it is not known for what purpose that he made the cancellation.

The backs of four stamps which were part of the exhibits before the Court at Chambéry—all stamped "Copie" on the reverse by the French authorities.

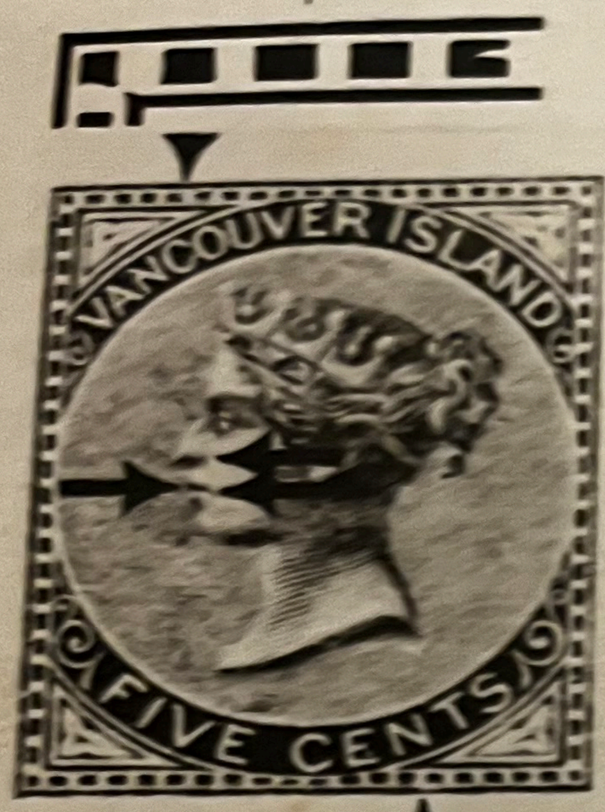
Sperati's "trade mark," sometimes found printed on the back of proofs or on his notepaper and approval books.

D-G A certified copy of Dr. Edmond Locard's report of which a translation is given in Chapter II.

H, J Two pages from Sperati's price list written in his own hand in 1953.

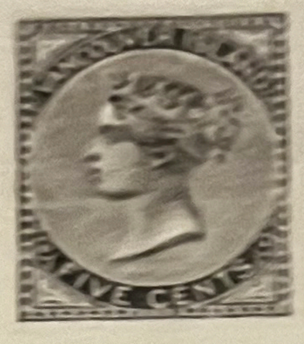
Dr. MIGUEL
CLINICA R
Apdo.

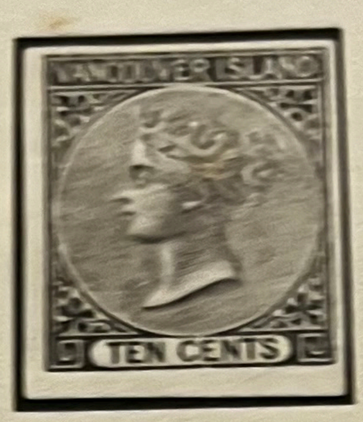
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iii iv

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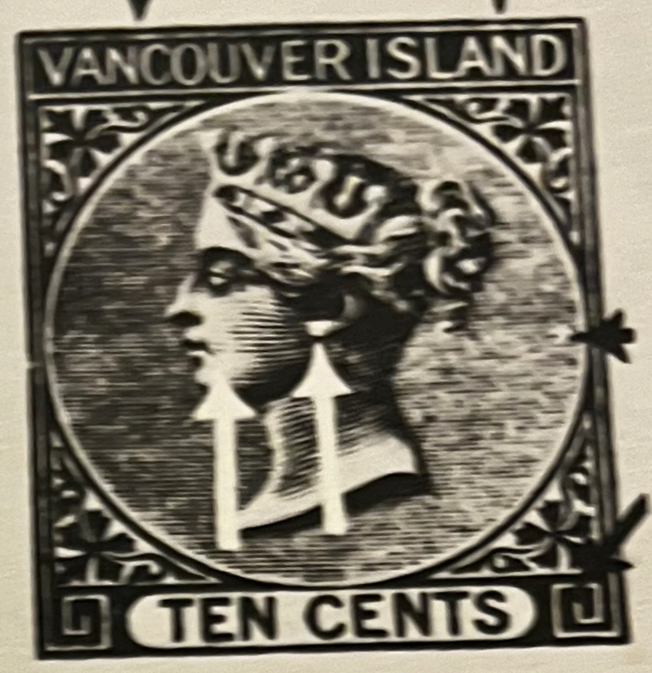




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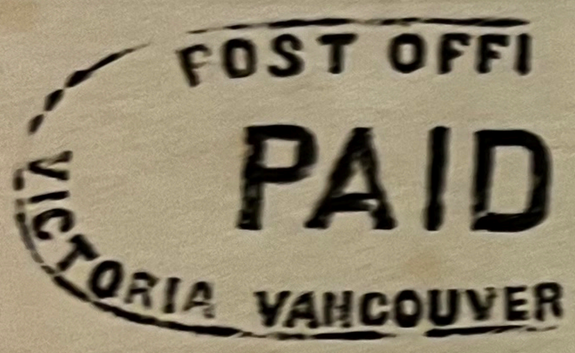


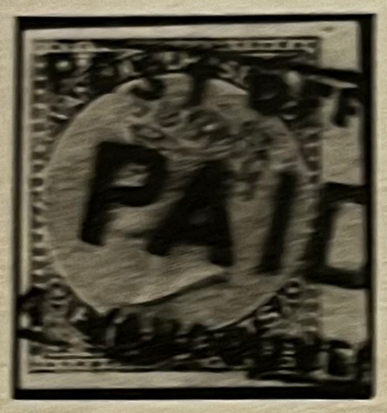
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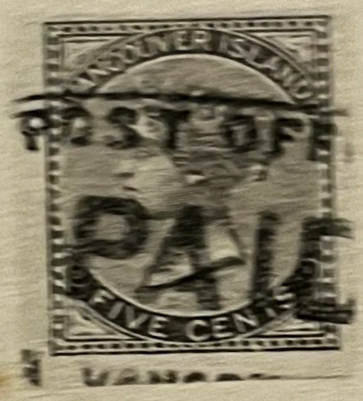


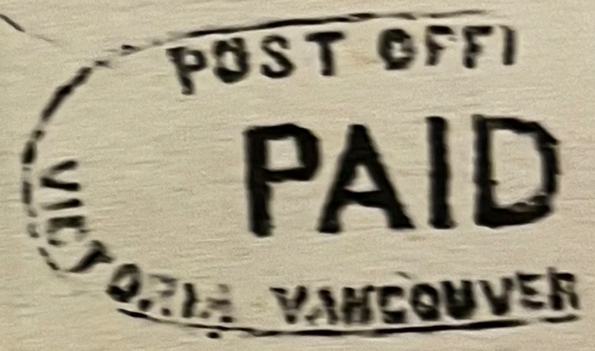
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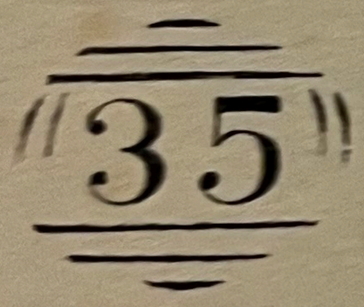




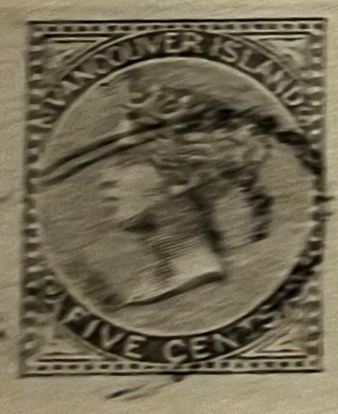




2 *The cancellations are forged.* 2

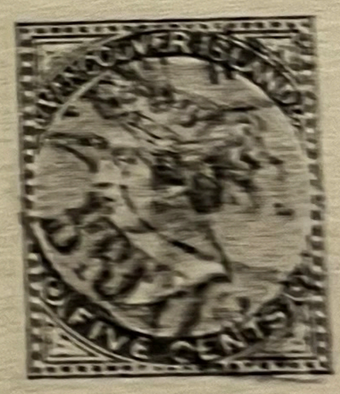


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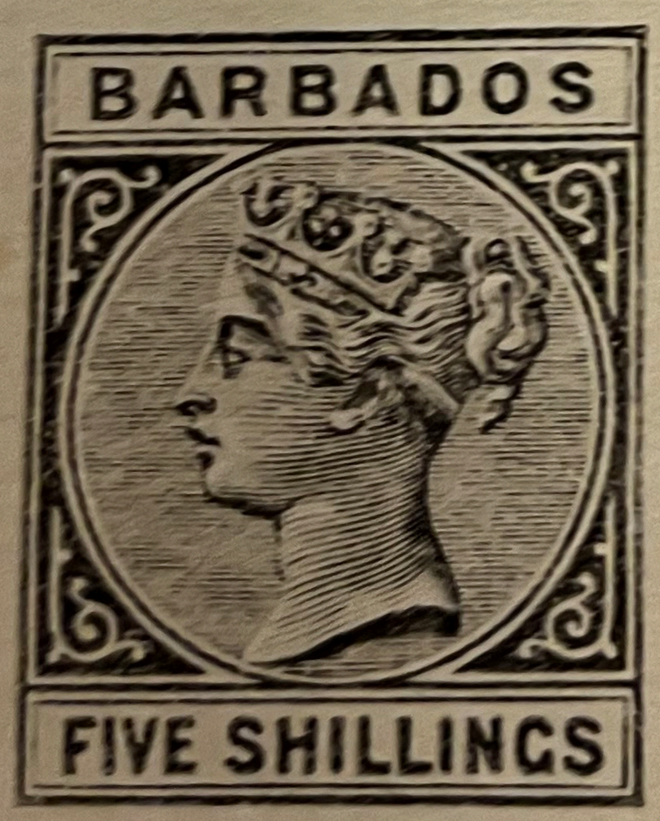
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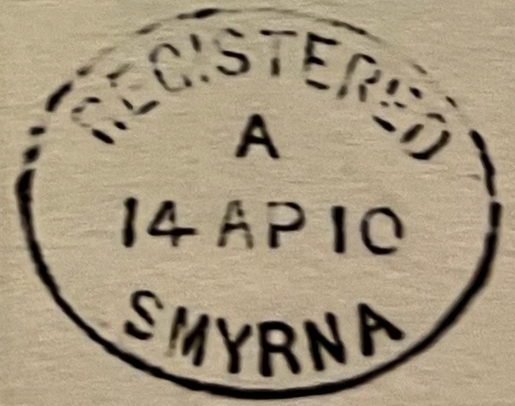
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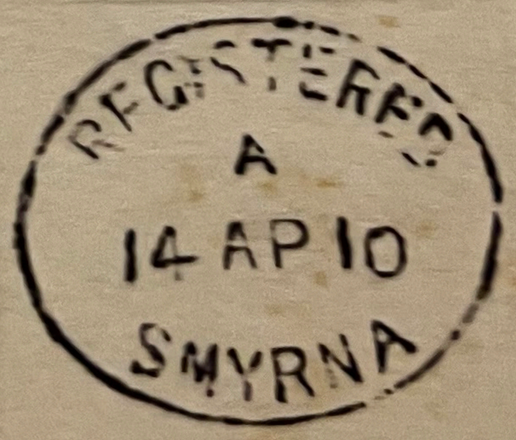
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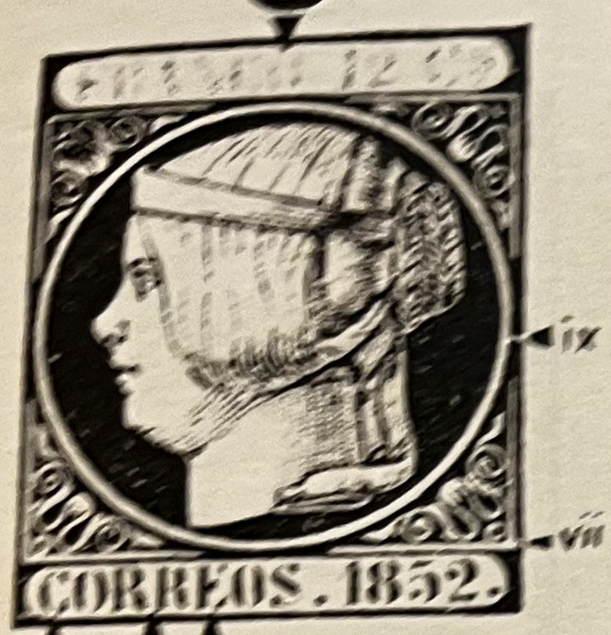


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iv v vi

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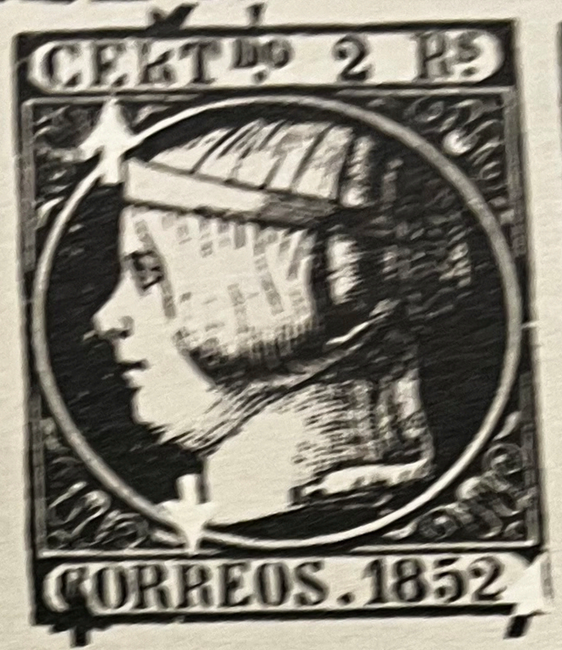
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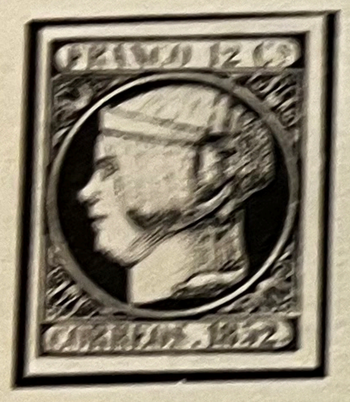
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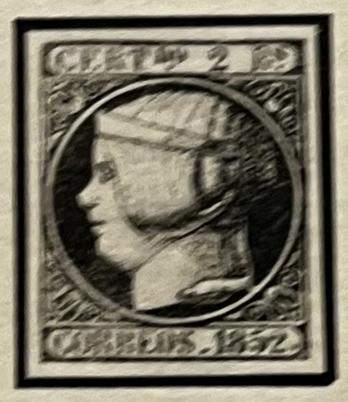
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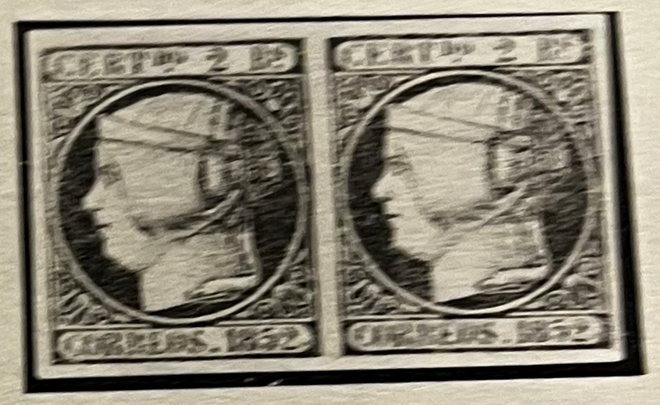


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iv v







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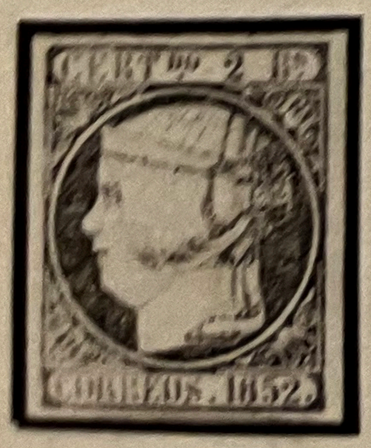
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E



vi vii

The same tests apply to the other two stamps

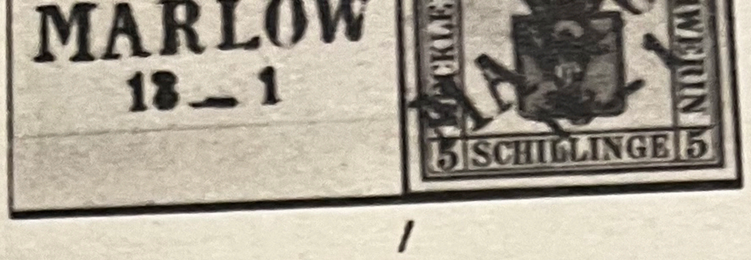




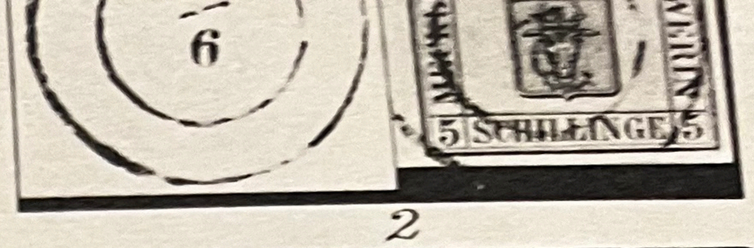
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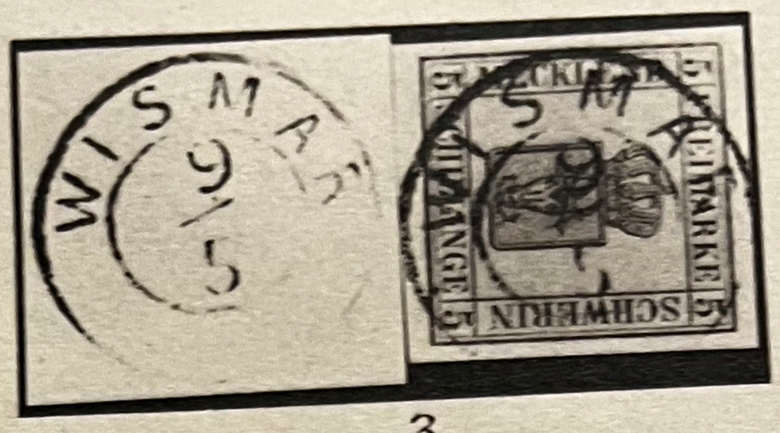




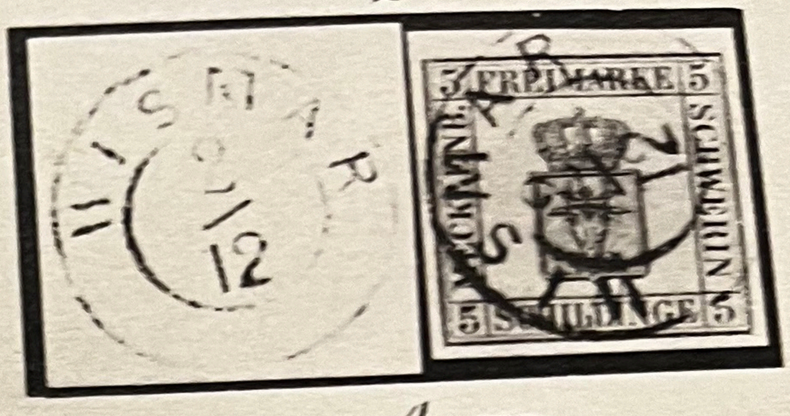
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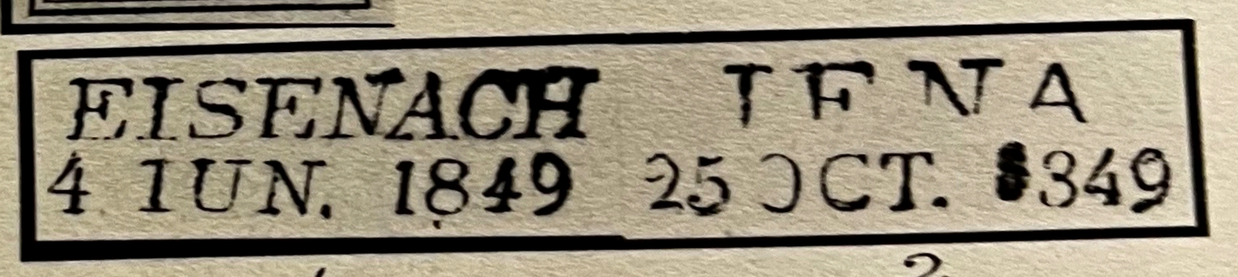


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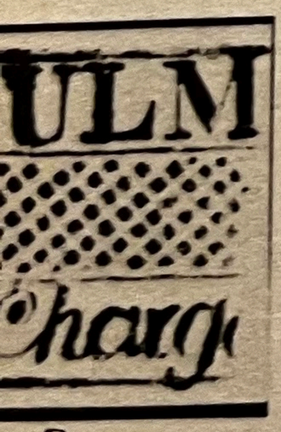






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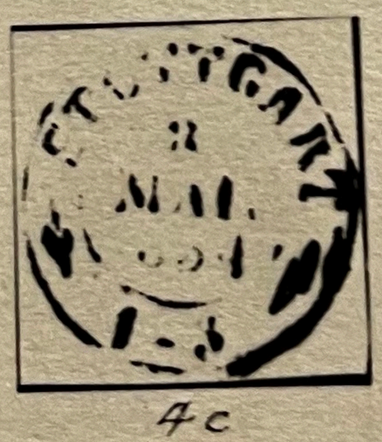


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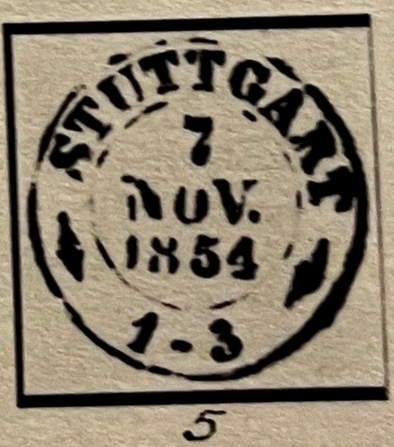


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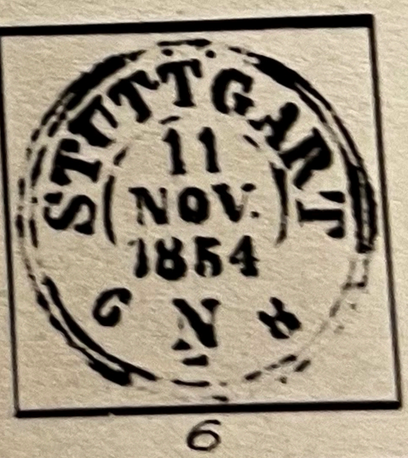
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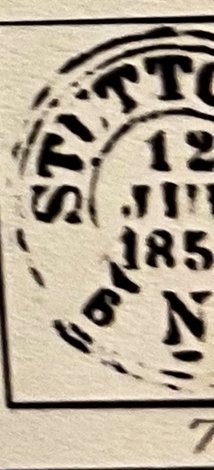
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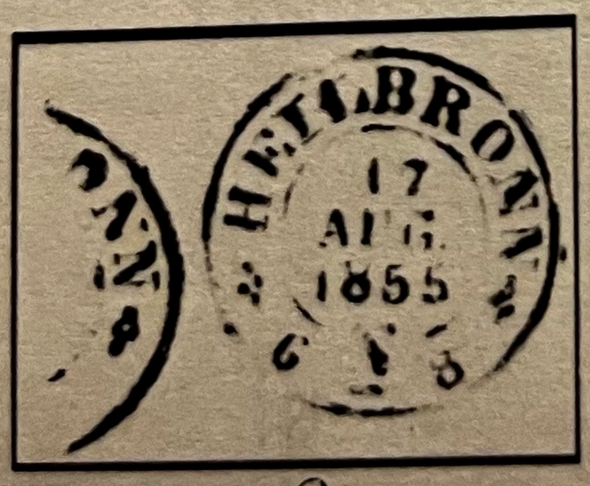
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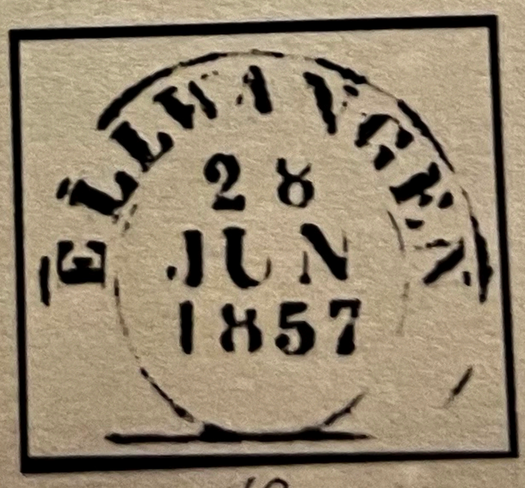
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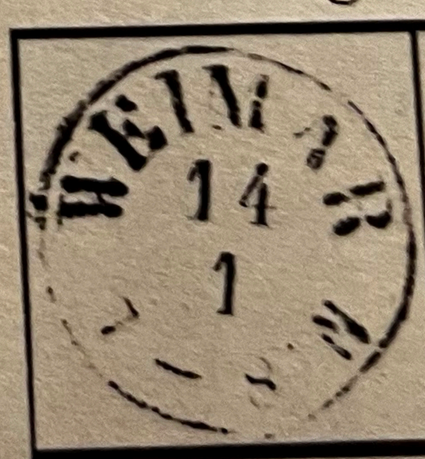
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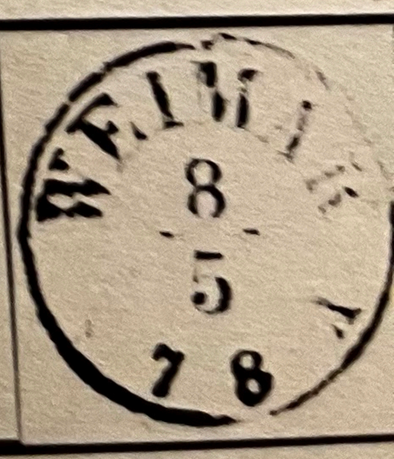
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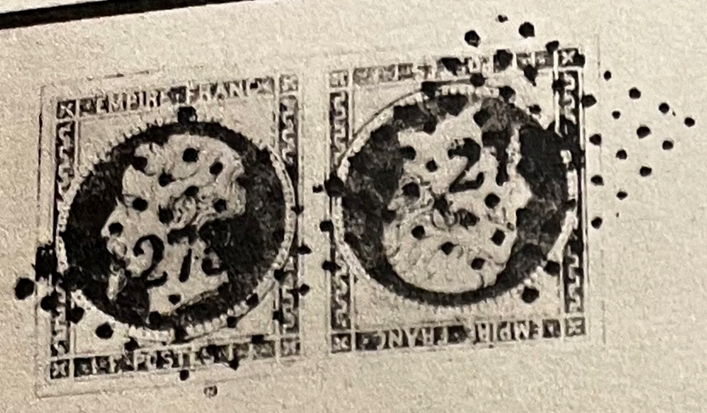
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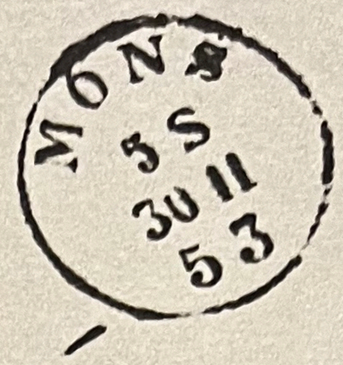
11.



12







PD

Monsieur Gautier aîné

Grand' place



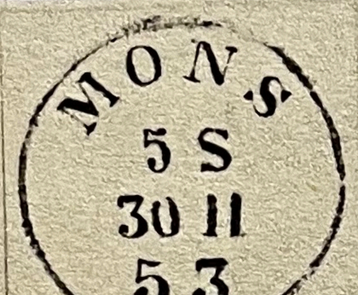
Mons

Belgique

TOILES, SACS, BACHES
SAINT FRÈRES
ROUEN

2738







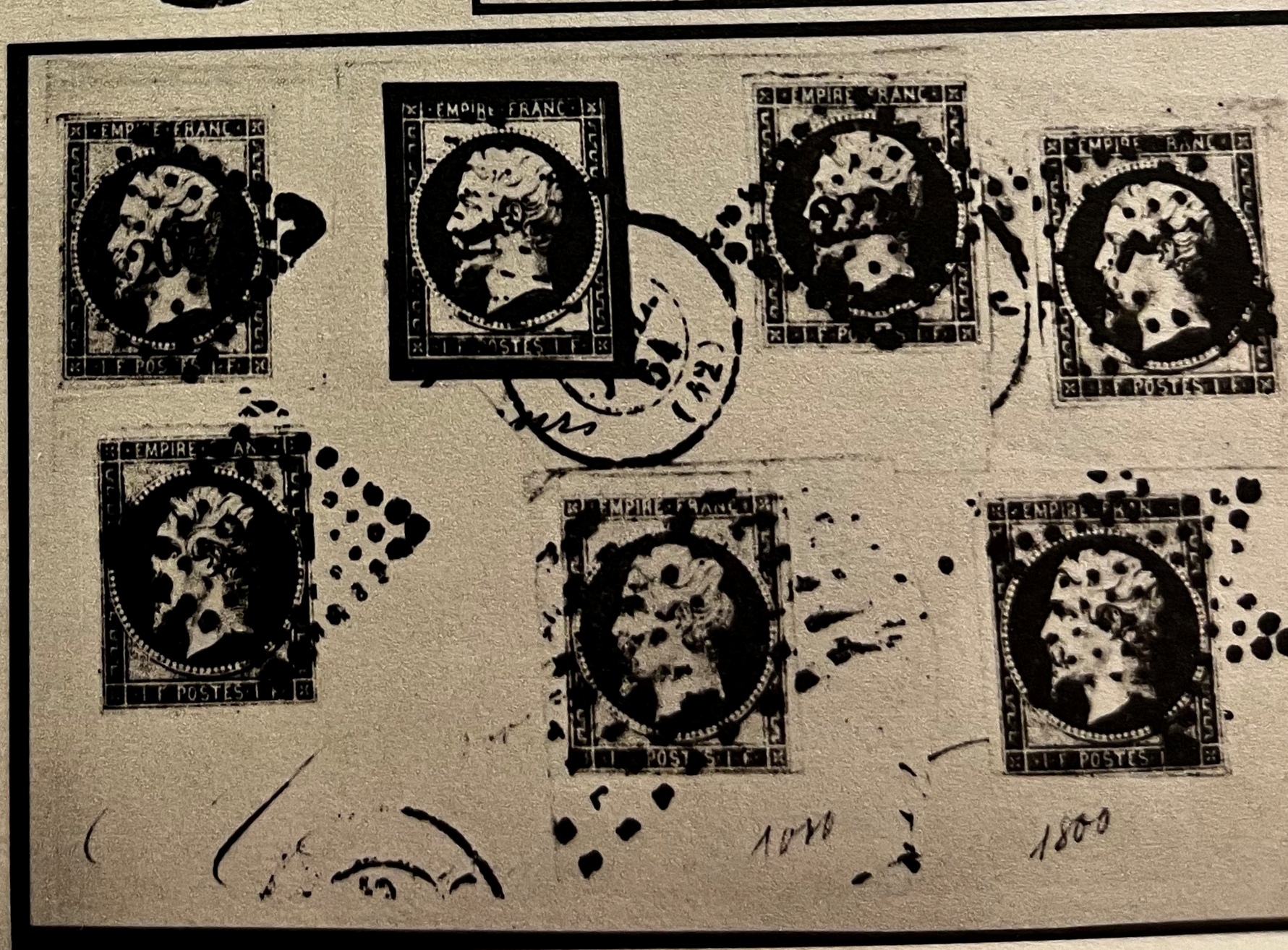
TOILES, SACS, BACHES
SAINT FRÈRES
ROUEN





e six impressions above
appear on the cover
aring the tête-bêche
r of the Napoleon 1 fr.

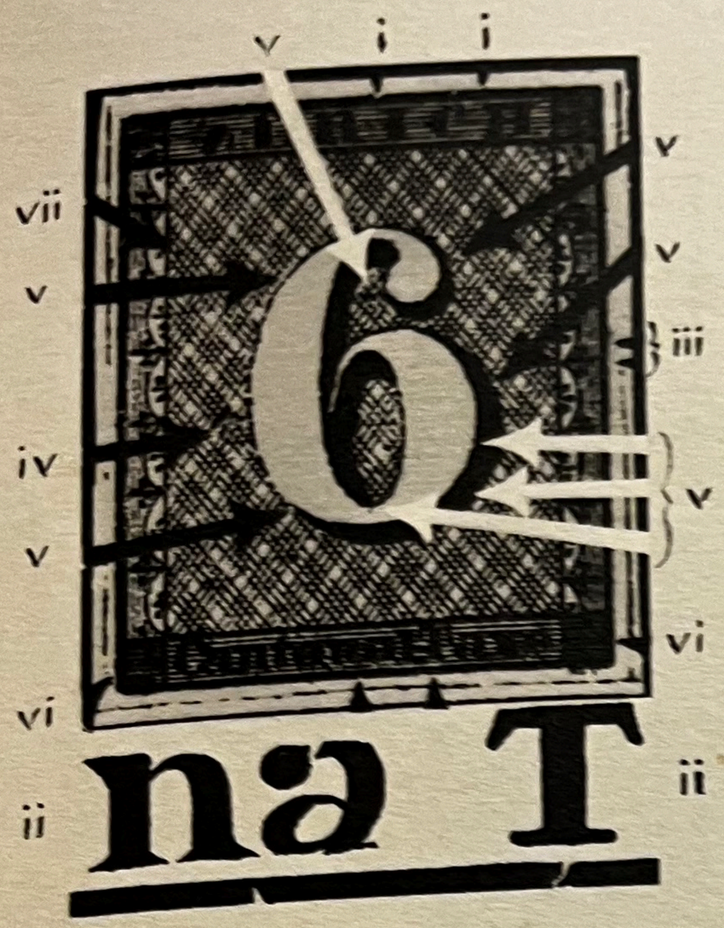
Ceres and Napoleon
on the right are prints
genuine paper with
genuine cancellations,
impression of a
mon denomination
ing been previously
nded by Sperati.



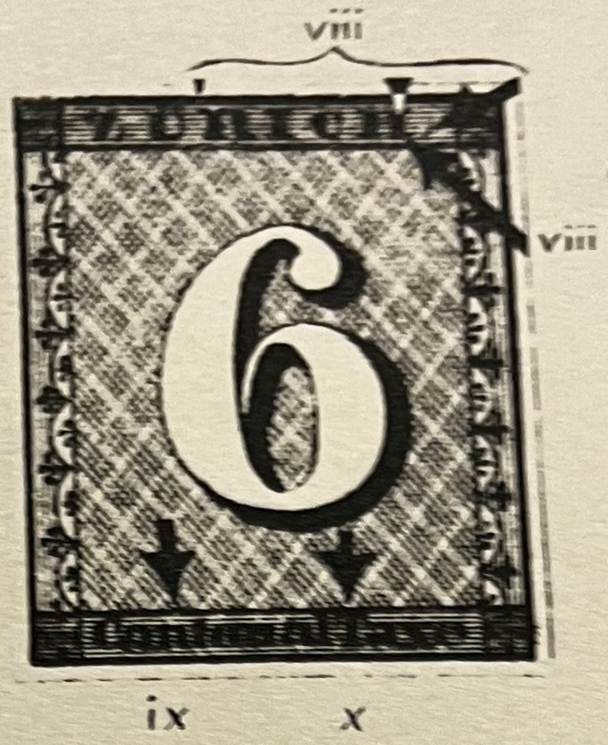
1870

1800

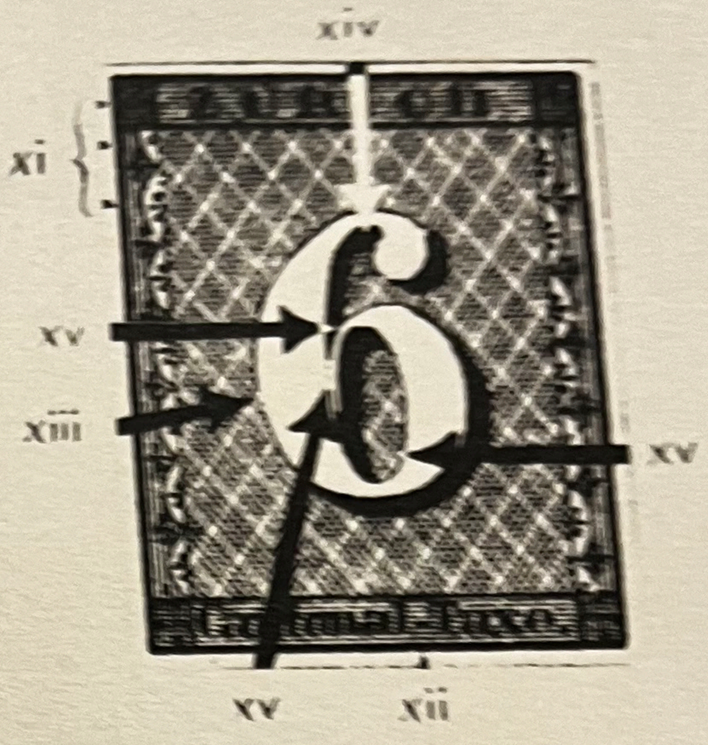
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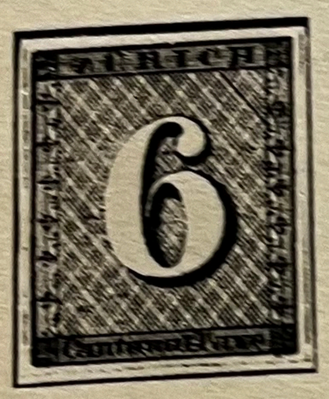


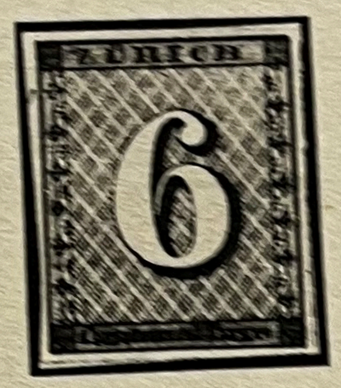
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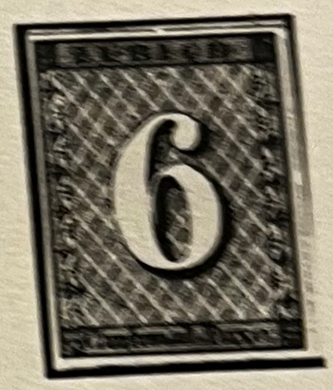


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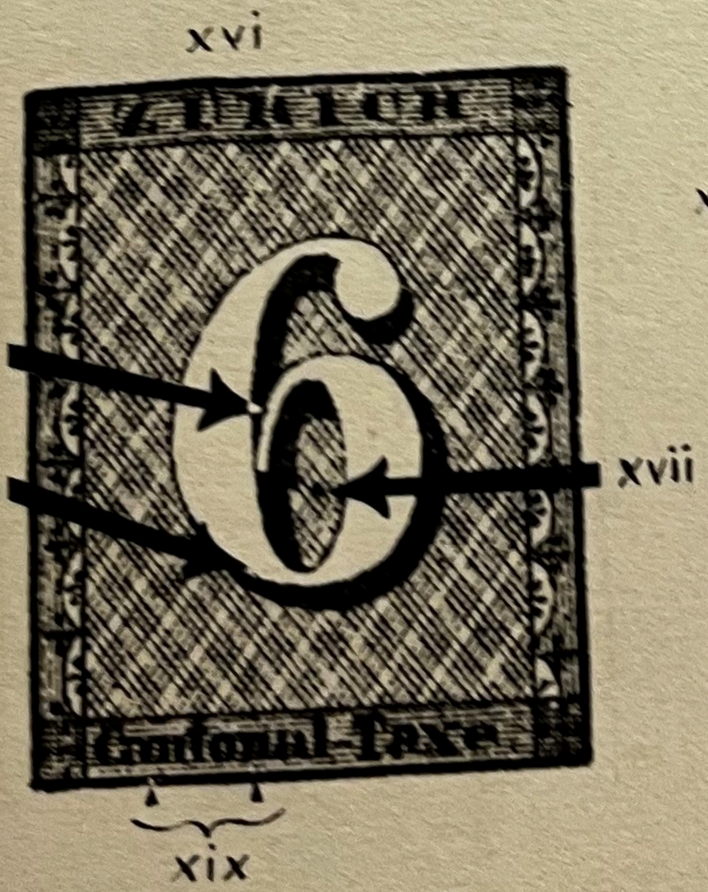




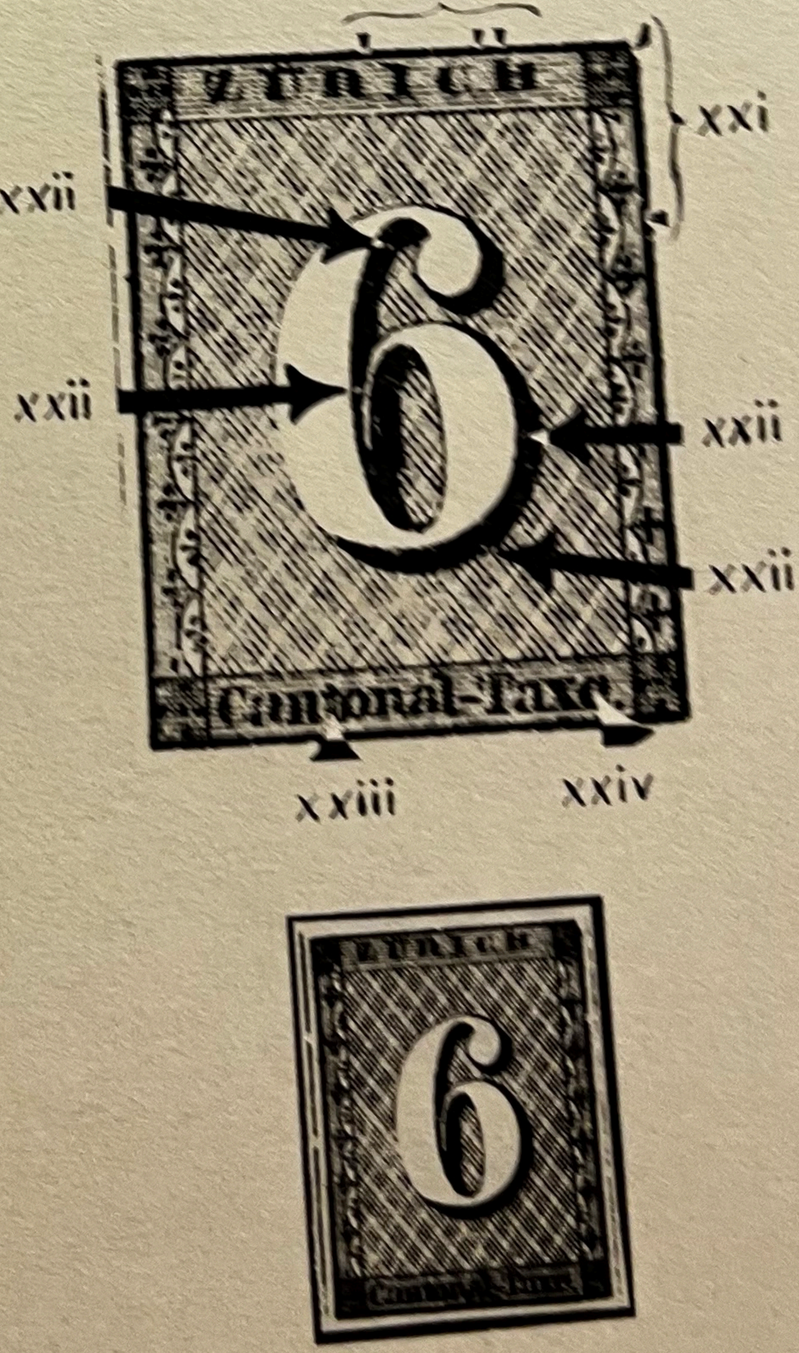




Type IV



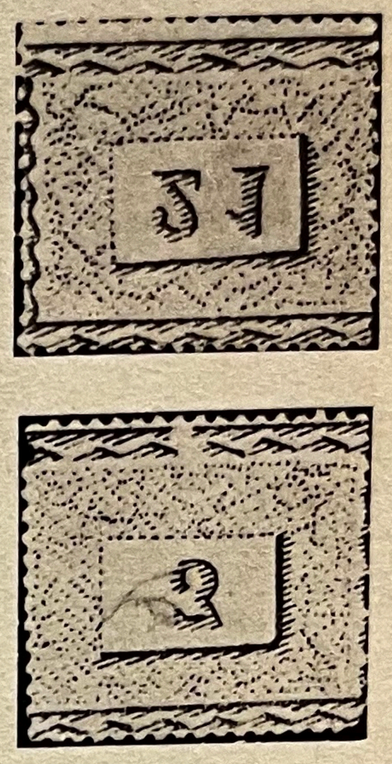
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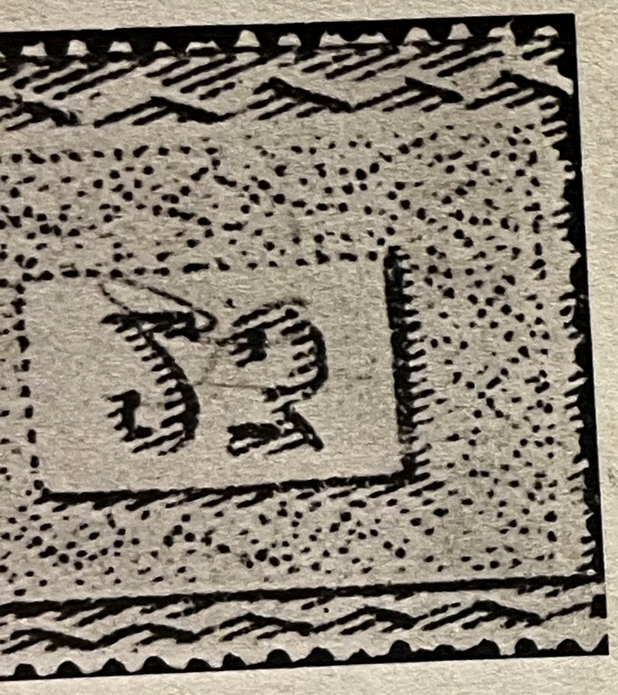


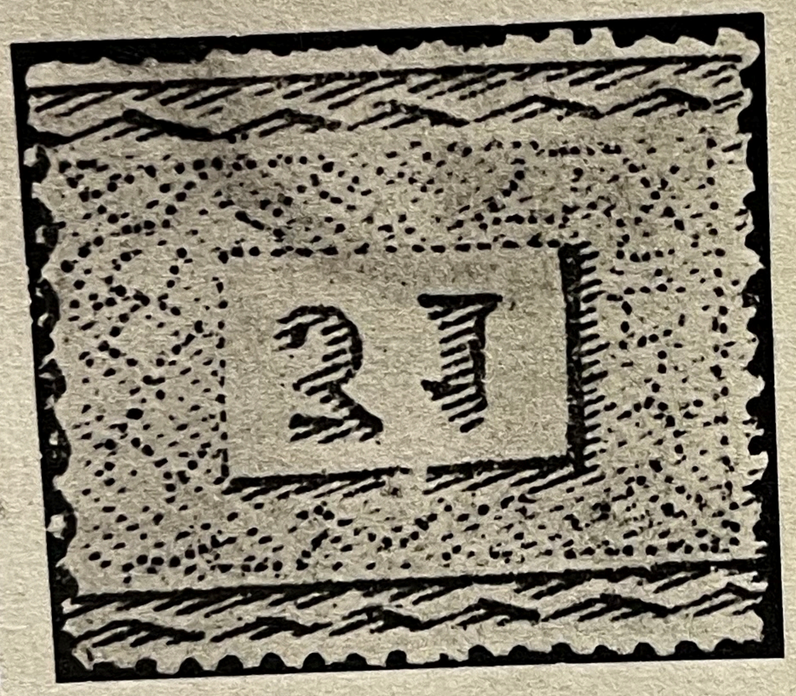



30
20
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20

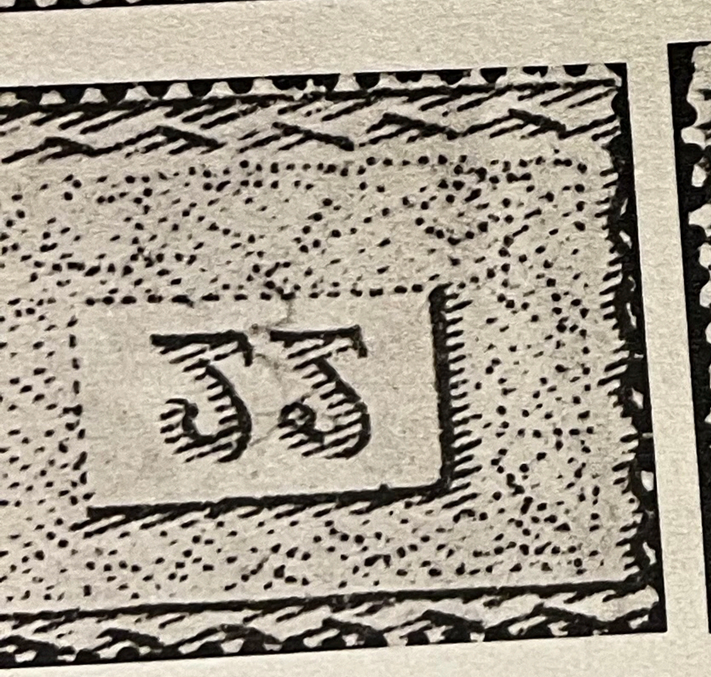


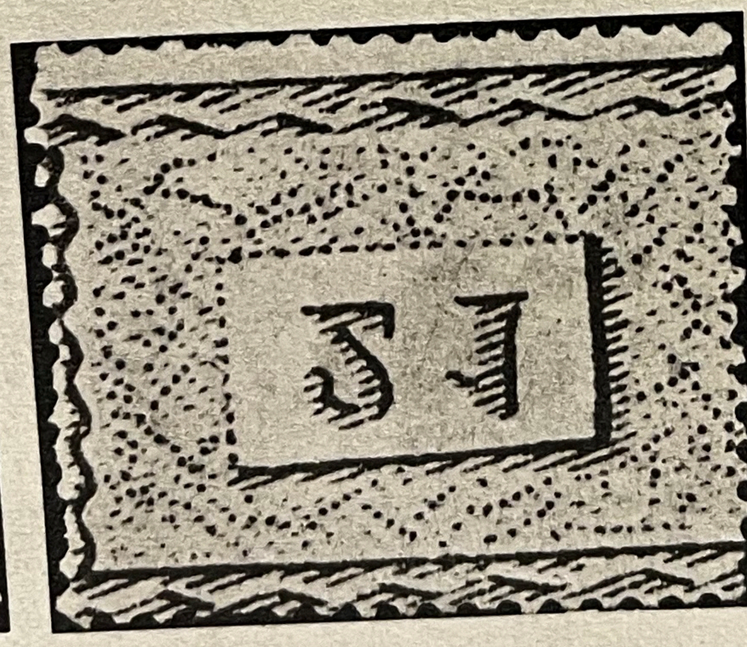






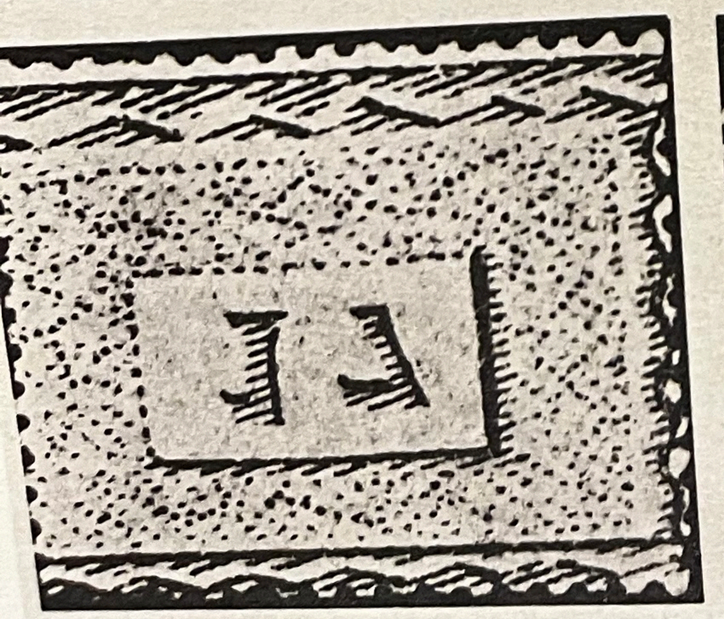

10 PESETAS
COMUNICACIONES

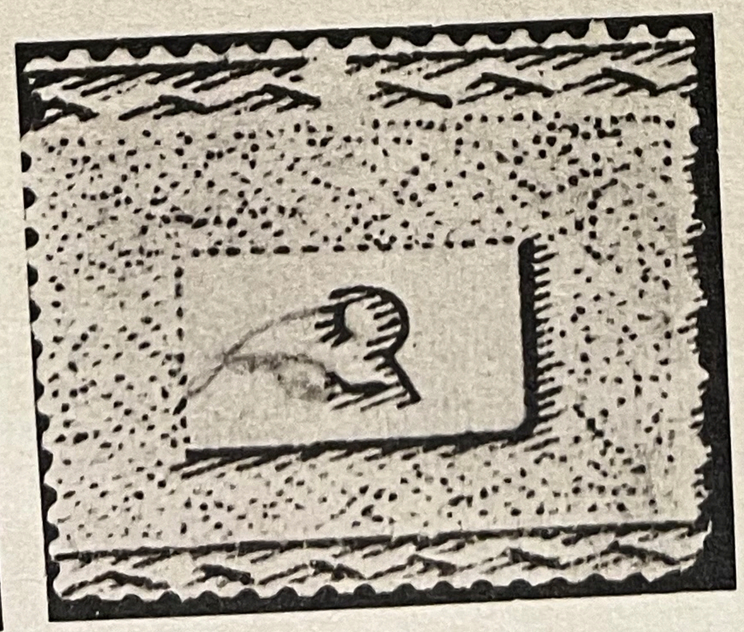






4 PESETAS
COMUNICACIONES








4 PESETAS
COMUNICACIONES

BACKPRINTS