

THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI II

FRENCH COLONIES

BENIN

*1892 Benin Overprint on French Colonies (Photographic Plate C)*

Sperati applied a reproduction of this overprint to genuine unused stamps of the French Colonies. Examples have been seen on the 1c black on azure, 4c purple-brown on grey (3 copies), 5c green on pale green with blue overprint (4 copies), and 25c black on rose. The 1894 overprinted 5c black postage due has also been seen. Four proof impressions from Sperati's archives also have been examined. Three were in blue; one was in black. All four were dated May 1943.

Sperati copied an overprint with the "B" cocked noticeably to the left, evidently an uncommon variety of Type I (Yvert & Tellier), early state. Other specific characteristics of the overprint are:



- (i) The right vertical of the second "N" bends to the left at the top. Both ends of all verticals of the "N"s and the "I" thicken at the top and bottom.
- (ii) The lower arm of the "E" thickens at the end. The middle arm of the "E" weakens at its join with the vertical.
- (iii) The vertical of the "B" thickens over its bottom one mm.
- (iv) The lowest horizontal of the "B" has a nick on its top, just as it joins the vertical.
- (v) The edges of all letters are a bit rough.

