

# THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

## ITALY

### 1863 Fifteen Centesimi (Photographic Plate C)

Examples of die proofs in pairs without head and four finished singles with inverted heads have been examined of this forgery. At the Musée de la Poste-Paris there are two matrices for the pair of frames, dated March 1951.

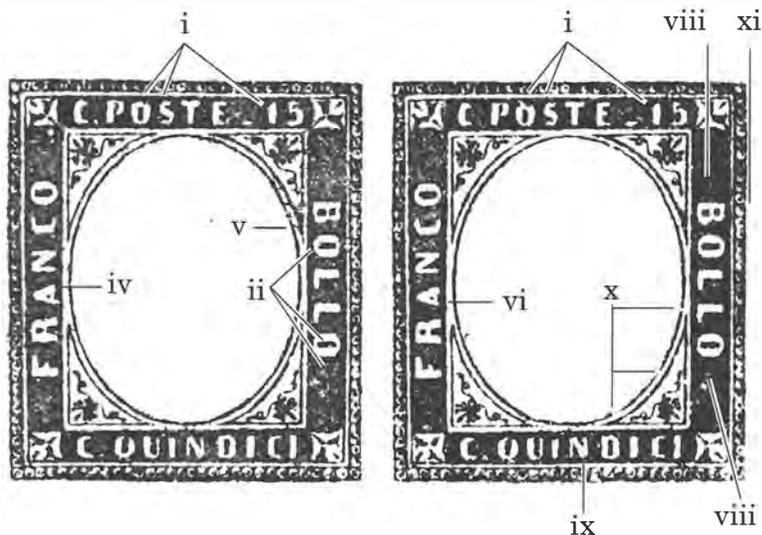
The 15 centesimi was lithographed in Turin by Matraire and issued on the 1st of January 1863 for provisional use pending the arrival of the De La Rue stamps. These forgeries of inverted heads have been made in the same way as the Sardinian forgeries with the genuine heads inverted as described on pages 103-105 (Plates 62 and 63) of *Sperati I*. The possibilities with this forgery are several: the normal stamp mint and used, the inverted head mint and used, and the variety with head omitted. The proofs are dated "6/4/51".

- Colour:* Deep bright blue—a fair match for the genuine. One proof pair is in new blue.  
*Impression:* Coarse in comparison with the genuine, the lettering being crude.  
*Basic Test:* C.  
*Cancellations:* Genuine.

#### SPECIFIC TESTS

##### *Reproduction A (left stamp)*

- (i) Note the poor shape to the "OS" in "POSTE" and the short "1" in "15" (holds also for reproduction B below).
- (ii) There are white spots in the centre of the "O"s of "BOLLO" and a white spot in the background after the "O".
- (iii) "QUIN" is badly drawn.
- (iv) The bottom of the right leg of the "A" of "FRANCO" is missing.
- (v) The upper right triangular frame, enclosing an ornament, has a barb on the left side of its lower point which is to the left of the "BO" of "BOLLO".



##### *Reproduction B (right stamp)*

- (vi) The left leg of the "A" of "FRANCO" is short.
- (vii) The "O" in "POSTE" is like an inverted "Q".
- (viii) There are white spots in the panel before and after "BOLLO".
- (ix) The "N" of "QUINDICI" has a coloured dot at the bottom of its right leg.
- (x) There are breaks in the inner oval at three-thirty, four and five o'clock.
- (xi) A vertical splash of colour is 0.5 mm. outside the right frame line, opposite the top of the "B" of "BOLLO".

# THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI II

## 1877 Ten Centesimi (Photographic Plate C)

A signed proof has been examined, as well as unused finished forgeries on genuine paper from which the impression of a genuine stamp has been removed. The finished forgeries were in an envelope dated December 1951 by Sperati. Further, a cliché and three prints in pale blue have been examined in the Sperati holdings of the Musée de la Poste-Paris. The cliché and prints are dated July 1951 and December 1951.

Besides the valuable unused 1877 10c blue of Italy, this could have been used to forge the unique stamp for Italian post offices in the Levant, overprinted ESTERO. However, only one genuine, used example of this stamp is known!

The genuine stamp was typographed and the reproduction was made by photo-lithography.

- Colour:* Pale blue and light blue—a fair match for the genuine.  
*Impression:* Flat in comparison with the genuine.  
*Basic Tests:* B, D, E and F.

### SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a lack of solidity in the background of the oval band containing the inscription. There is a white spot between the “NE” of “ITALIANE”.
- (ii) There is a nick in the outer oval below the first “E” of “CENTESIMI”.
- (iii) There is a bite from the bottom of the coloured oval containing “POSTE” just after the “E” of this word. Below and to the right of this there is a bend in the inner oval frame line.
- (iv) Two breaks are in the inner oval frame line above the “E” of “CENTESIMI”.
- (v) The lowest background shading line is broken in the middle. The fourth shading line from the bottom is broken 0.75 mm. from its left end.
- (vi) The two right outer frame lines are joined by a smudge 5 mm from the top.



## THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

### 1879 *Thirty Centesimi* (Photographic Plate C)

Several unused, ungummed examples of this reproduction have been examined. They are printed on genuine paper from which the impression of a genuine stamp has been removed. The genuine stamp was typographed and the reproduction was made by photo-lithography. The watermark and perforations are genuine.

*Colour:* Brown  
*Impression:* Flat in comparison with the genuine.  
*Basic Tests:* B, D, E, F and K.

#### SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) Three constant flaws occur in the top frame line toward the right.
- (ii) There is a lack of solidity in the background of the oval band containing the inscription, notably between the "OSTE" of "POSTE" and the "ALIAN" of "ITALIANE".
- (iii) Several constant flaws are in the solid inner oval, particularly below the "PO" and "E" of "POSTE".
- (iv) There are several white spots in the heavy shading above the eyes.
- (v) A coloured dot is one mm to the left of the left ear, between the second and third shading lines above the ear. The shading line immediately below the dot is broken 0.5 mm. from its right end.
- (vi) A similar coloured dot is between two shading lines 0.75 mm. to the left of the neck.
- (vii) There is a coloured dot in the outer white oval above the right side of the "M" of "CENTESIMI".
- (viii) The top of the corner frame is broken away SE of the upper right foliate ornament.
- (ix) A diagonal white slash runs from the top right of the second "T" of "TRENTA" into the inner oval frame.



THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI II  
1922-23 SEMI-POSTALS OVERPRINTED "BLP" (Photographic Plate C)

Sperati reproduced the second BLP overprint used in 1922-23 and applied it to genuine stamps. The normal overprint has been seen on the 60c carmine and the 1 lira brown and green; the inverted overprint has been seen on the 40c brown and the 1 lira. Two proofs of the overprint have also been available for examination. They were dated May 1951 by Sperati.

In addition, at the Musée de la Poste-Paris there is a Sperati matrix (negative) for this same forged overprint, dated May 1951.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a break in the top line of the "B" on most copies. A black dot is attached to the bottom of this line.
- (ii) A dot is attached to the top of the middle curve of the "B".
- (iii) The thin vertical shading line of the "L" has a dot on its left at the middle; just below this there is a dot on the right side of the thick vertical of the "L".
- (iv) A black dot lies between the thin vertical shading line and the thick vertical of the "L" at their bottom.
- (v) A black dot is 0.25 mm. above the top of the "P".
- (vi) The bottom of the curved shading line on the "P" is broken in two places.



CANCELLATION

A Sperati matrix (negative) at the Musée de la Poste-Paris has on it "BLP/noir" (BLP/black). It is \*ROMA\*/13.2.22.21/RACCOMANDATE in a single circle 28.7 mm wide.



Musée de la Poste—Paris

## THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

### *1924 5 Lire "ENTI PARASTATALI" (Photographic Plate C)*

Four examples of proofs of these stamps, originating from Sperati's archives, have been examined with the assistance of the Italian expert, Maurizio Raybaudi. Three are brown shades and one with an apparent double impression is lake-brown, all being without any organizational designation in black at the bottom. Specific tests for the basic stamp are given under (A) below.

The Musée de la Poste-Paris has a matrix (negative) for this same forgery, again without organizational designation, dated May 1951. There is also a test print with organizational designation "ASSOC. NAZ. MUTIL./INV. GUERRA-ROMA". Further, there are matrices for "ASSOC. NAZ. MUTIL./INV. GUERRA-ROMA", showing that it was copied from a 10 centesimi value; and for "OPERA NAZ. PROTEZ./ASSIST. INV. GUERRA", showing that it was copied from a 5 centesimi value. These are dated June 1951. The specific tests for these organizational designators are given below under (B) and (C), respectively.

In addition, the Musée has a matrix and a photo-print for "ASSOC. NAZ. MUTIL./INV. GUERRA-ROMA" over four annulling bars, dated May 1951. In the genuine this was used to overprint the "OPERA NAZ. PROTEZ./ ASSIST. INV. GUERRA". Since this overprint on a genuine stamp would create a lesser valued stamp, it must have been intended only for use on the forged stamp. This is not quite the same as organizational designator B. Specific tests for this overprint forgery are given below under (D).

Thus, Sperati was prepared to forge and probably did forge the three rarest "Enti Parastatali" 5 lire stamps: the dark brown Sassone 12 and 57 for Assoc. Naz. Mutil. Inv. Guerra-Roma and Opera Naz. Protez. Assist. Inv. Guerra, respectively; as well as, Sassone 77, the Opera Naz. Protez. Assist. Inv. Guerra overprinted for Assoc. Naz. Mutil. Inv. Guerra-Roma. He may also have offered proofs without organizational designation.

The "Enti Parastatali" postage stamps were used from March 1924 by certain institutions (corporations) which were supported, in part, by the Italian government. These stamps permitted a debit to the sponsoring Italian Ministry. Their use ended in December 1924.

The genuine stamps were typographed while the forgeries were made by photo-lithography. The forgeries lack the typographic wave of the genuine.

One of the four die proofs examined, that with a double impression, is lake-brown, completely different from the genuine dark brown, and is dated June 1951. The other three vary from light brown to brown to deep brown, bracketing the colour of the genuine.

# THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI II

## (A) Basic Stamp

### SPECIFIC TESTS (A)

- (i) The main difference is the shape of the "2" in "1924" which has a flat end in the genuine, but an upright end in the forgery. This occurs also in the matrix at the Musée de la Poste-Paris. It seems an atypical error by Sperati.
- (ii) There is a break in the outer left frame line, 2.5 mm from the bottom, a break in the top three frame lines 3.0 mm from the left corner, and a break in the bottom two frame lines 6.7 mm from the left corner.
- (iii) The top curve of "S" of "POSTE" is broken at the left. The "E" of this word has a white dot in its vertical, opposite the middle cross bar.
- (iv) The first "A" of "ITALIANE" has a nick on the outside of its left leg, opposite its cross bar.
- (v) The right side of the nostril consists of a thin curved line to the left of a thick line in the genuine. In the Sperati forgery these lines are merged.
- (vi) A dot joins the upper two frame lines below the "E" of "POSTE".



## THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

### (B) ASSOC. NAZ. MUTIL. / INV. GUERRA-ROMA designator

#### SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) In "ASSOC." the "A" has a small dent in its left side. The second "S" has a dot on top of its lower limb and another on top of the top limb.
- (ii) In "NAZ." the right vertical of the "N" has a nick out of its upper left corner, the "A" has a small dent in its right side, and the top side of the top arm of the "Z" is concave upwards.
- (iii) The "M" of "MUTIL." has a small nick in the left side of the left diagonal and another in the right side of the right diagonal. The "T" has a nick in its top side.
- (iv) The "I" of "INV." is pinched in the middle. The "V" has nicks in its left and right outer sides.
- (v) In "GUERRA" there is a small nick in the left side of the right arm of the "U". The lower arm of the "E" bulges out, at top and bottom. The right leg of the "A" has a bulge at the right side of its foot.
- (vi) The vertical of the "R" of "ROMA" is pinched in on its right side, at the level of the loop. The left

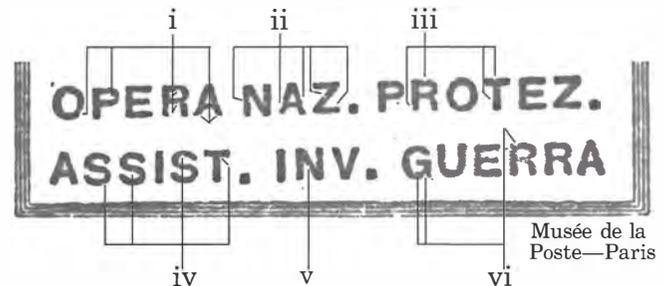


leg of the "M" is rough and almost detached from the diagonal; the right diagonal has a small dent in its left side. The left leg of the "A" bends outward at the bottom.

### (C) OPERA NAZ. PROTEZ. / ASSIST. INV. GUERRA designator

#### SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) The "O" of "OPERA" is squeezed in at the SE. The "P" has a white dot at the lower right of its loop. The right leg of the "R" is squeezed in where it meets the loop. Both legs of the "A" end with non-horizontal cuts, downward to the outside.
- (ii) In "NAZ." the "N" is dented inward on the inside of the left leg, where it meets the diagonal. There is one small dent on the outside left of the "A"; there are two small dots on the outside right of this letter. The lower bar of the "Z" is pinched near its end.
- (iii) The left leg of the "R" of "PROTEZ." is pinched in on its left, at the bottom. There is a small dent in the top of the "T".
- (iv) The first "S" of "ASSIST." has a dot on the outside of its upper loop, at the left, and a dent in the outside of the lower loop, at the bottom right. The second "S" has a nick in the bottom of



- (v) The "N" of "INV." has a small nick in the left side of its diagonal.
- (vi) In "GUERRA" there is a dot on top of the lower loop of the "G", near the middle. To the right of this there is a small nick on the bottom of the loop. The first "R" has nicks in its top and left side, near the NW corner.

THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI II

(D) ASSOC. NAZ. MUTIL. /INV. GUERRA-ROMA / (four bars, about 18.5 mm long) for use over  
OPER NAZ. PROTEZ. /ASSIST. INV. GUERRA

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) In "ASSOC." there are dots near the top on the left of the "A". There is a dot on the underside of both "S"s. The top right of the "C" is nearly pinched off.
- (ii) The "I" of "INV." is pinched in from both sides, toward its top.
- (iii) The "E" of "GUERRA" has its top arm pinched in near its end, most strongly on its bottom.
- (iv) The four annulling lines have rough edges all along.
- (v) The genuine overprints are typographed. The Sperati forgeries are lithographed and lack the typographic wave.



Musée de la Poste—Paris