

BRITISH EMPIRE

NEWFOUNDLAND

1857-60

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in black and in colour, as well as unused and used reproductions of five different values. In some cases the cliché used for the scarlet-vermilion was the same as that used for the orange-vermilion and in other cases each colour had its own cliché. The description of these stamps is therefore arranged firstly in general terms which relate to all values and secondly in the specific terms dealing with each value. The cancellations on all values are dealt with under one heading.

**PRINTING:** The genuine stamps were engraved while the Sperati reproductions are produced by photo-lithography. Therefore the raised effect of the ink, which is the common feature of the genuine stamps, is entirely missing in the reproductions. There is a very strong illusion that some of the reproductions are genuine stamps but, in the main, the work is very coarse and rough when examined under magnification  $\times 10$ .

**COLOUR:** The 1857 issue was printed in scarlet-vermilion and the reproductions often exactly match the originals, but there is a general tendency for the colours to be a little more intense. Some of the unused 6d. are rather more brownish than the original as the effect of oxidization has been given, while the colour of most of the 1/- of this issue, are very vivid and a shade that is only to be found on the very finest copies of the genuine stamp. The genuine 1860 stamps are printed in orange-vermilion and the reproductions match the original very well with the exception of the 1/-, the genuine stamp is rather a dull shade while in many cases the reproduction is a vivid orange-vermilion. Most of the reproductions show black spots all over the stamps.

**PAPER:** The 1857 issue was printed on thick unwatermarked paper and the reproductions are on very similar paper. The 1860 issue was printed on thin unwatermarked paper while the reproductions are often similar to the genuine but of a rather more variable quality, sometimes less transparent, than found on the originals and a number of the 4d. value are found on paper with a script watermark! Under the Mercury Vapour lamp the paper of the Sperati's show curious stains either of a brownish or rosy-mauve appearance, which are not found on the genuine unless

they have been maltreated. The genuine paper of the 1857 issue appears to be quite white while the 1860 issue is rather greyish.

**GUM:** The genuine gum is colourless and clear, but on the few unused copies of Sperati's work which have been gummed, it is rather yellowish in appearance and very much thicker than the genuine.

**IMPRESSION:** All the genuine stamps are normally clear and sharp and the surface is quite shiny when the stamp is held at an angle so that the light is reflected from the plane of the stamp. In comparison, the impressions of the reproductions tend to be worn and rough and the surface is flat.

**CANCELLATIONS (Plate 17):** Nos. 1 to 12. Ovals of eight or ten bars. Varying impressions as illustrated. Nos. 9 and 10 are frequently found used together to cancel copies of the 1/- scarlet-vermilion and the 1/- orange-vermilion as illustrated. It is possible that types 3 and 4, 7 and 8 were similarly used in pairs but no example has been recorded. Some of the negatives from which these cancellations were made are dated March 1920, May 1929 and March 1930.

13. This is only found in one position and on the second of the reproductions of the 4d. scarlet-vermilion.

14. "CANCEL(LED)" in an oval with four bars above and below is found on the 4d., 6½d. and 1/- scarlet-vermilion and the 4d. orange-vermilion.

15. "ST. JOHN'S NEWFOUNDLAND, PAID/FB5/1859" usually found used alone on 1/- scarlet-vermilion or in conjunction with one of the ovals containing ten horizontal bars on both the 4d. and 1/- scarlet-vermilion.

TWO PENCE

PLATE 15

SPECIFIC TESTS

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in black and in orange-vermilion as well as unused. It is very probable that he also made reproductions in scarlet-vermilion as well as used examples of both colours.

For comparison use the genuine stamp or the 1861-62 2d. rose-lake.

(i) There is a dot in the "S" of "JOHN'S."

- (ii) There is a smear in the top of the "O" of "FOUND."
- (iii) There is a mark across "ND" of "LAND" (Plate 15).
- (iv) In the word "POSTAGE" there is a dash in the "P," a smear in the top of the "T," a smear and two dots in the "A," and two dots in the "E."
- (v) There is a guide-line at the bottom south-east corner which is particularly strong in the head of the figure "2."
- (vi) There are marks in both "E"s of "PENGE."

Newfoundland--*contd.*

## FOUR PENCE

## PLATE 15

For comparison use the 1861-62 4d. rose-lake.

In all genuine stamps the outer frame-line in the top right corner is incomplete and shows a break on the right side opposite the bottom of the inner frame-line that surrounds the background of the figure "4." This is very obvious on cleanly printed copies of the genuine. None of the Sperati imitations show this break.

In the genuine, the engraving is fine and delicate, the width of the engraved lines varying rather as in copper-plate writing (where the up strokes are thin and the down strokes thick). In comparison, the lines of engraving in the Sperati reproductions are all of one thickness. This feature is particularly noticeable in the scroll ornaments which support the corner figure squares.

Sperati made three reproductions:

## Reproduction "A"

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in colour showing the cancellation in black, as well as used reproductions in scarlet-vermilion. This reproduction is also known in an unfinished state before the black cancellation has been applied to cover the marks on the scarlet vermilion stamp. As the cancellation is always in the identical position it is hardly necessary to give any other specific tests, but the two following will serve to identify the stamps in any circumstances:

- (i) The bottom right serif of the "F" of "FOUR" has an indentation of colour and there are two dots in the top of "R" (Plate 15).
- (ii) The solid background behind the figure "4" in the lower right corner is joined at left to the inner frame-line by a diagonal line of colour.

## Reproduction "B"

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in scarlet-vermilion, unused and used reproductions in both scarlet and orange-vermilion. This reproduction may be found in two states, test (iii) applying to the first state only, the other tests to both states.

- (iii) There is a worn patch in the shading below the "DL" of "NEWFOUNDLAND" which has been retouched in the second state.
- (iv) There is a white spot after the "E" of "POSTAGE" opposite the middle horizontal stroke and the top outline of this letter is very irregular.
- (v) There is a spot of colour in the lower left upright stroke of the "N" and two spots of colour in the second "D" of "NEWFOUNDLAND" is very irregular on the left (Plate 15).
- (vi) There is a white spot before the "F" of "FOUR."
- (vii) There is a white dash before the "P" of "PENCE," the left serif at the foot of the "N" turns upwards and the letters "CE" are joined at foot by a diagonal white stroke.

## Reproduction "C"

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in black and in orange-vermilion as well as unused and used reproductions in both scarlet and orange-vermilion.

- (viii) There is a break above the "E" of "POSTAGE" (Plate 15).
- (ix) Two-thirds of the inner right frame-line around the figure "4" in the lower left corner are broken.
- (x) The outer frame-line at the bottom right corner is broken.

## SIX PENCE

## PLATE 16

Sperati is known to have made two reproductions and from those copies examined it would appear that the first was reserved for his scarlet-vermilion and the second for the orange-vermilion. "Die" proofs in black and in colour as well as unused and used reproductions of both are known. It would appear that the reproduction of the orange-vermilion (this cliché is dated November 1939) is a transfer from his reproduction of the scarlet-vermilion and has been slightly retouched.

For comparison use the 1861-62 6d. rose-lake.

Unless otherwise mentioned the following specific tests apply to both reproductions:

- (i) There is a break in the right frame just below the top right numeral which is only found on the scarlet-vermilion stamps; signs of retouching are obvious in this place in the orange-vermilion.
- (ii) There is a spot on the back of the neck of the "S" of "POSTAGE," there is a nick in the bottom of the "T"

and the upper left serif is the wrong shape. The "T" and "A" are joined together at the foot (Plate 16).

- (iii) There is a white stroke emerging out of the tail of the "S" of "SIX" travelling diagonally towards and sometimes touching the circle containing the lower left "6."
- (iv) There is a constant weakness between the "X" of "SIX" and the "P" of "PENCE."
- (v) The central horizontal strokes of both "E"s of "PENCE" have misshapen serifs. In the first "E" the lower serif of the central stroke touches the serif of the bottom stroke. In the second "E" both serifs of the central stroke are extended so that they are joined to the serifs of the upper and lower strokes.
- (vi) There is a second state of the second reproduction which shows a break in the white circle surrounding the figure in the lower left corner. This has only been seen in the form of a "die" proof in black.

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Newfoundland—*contd.*

SIX PENCE HALFPENNY

PLATE 15

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs in black and in colour as well as unused and used reproductions.

For comparison use the 1861-62 6½d. rose-lake.

- (i) There is a coloured dot in the head of the "S" and in the right leg of the "X" of "SIX" and a white stroke under the "1."

- (ii) There is a defect in the background above the first "E" of "PENCE" and the "C" and "E" of the same word are roughly joined together at the foot.

- (iii) The frame is broken below the "F" of "HALF."

- (iv) There are dots between the "P" and "E" and the "N" and "Y" of "PENNY."

ONE SHILLING

PLATE 16

Sperati made three reproductions of this value:

A, which is known in the form of a "die" proof in scarlet-vermilion.

B, is known in a "die" proof in orange-vermilion. Unused and used in both scarlet and orange-vermilion. This cliché is dated 3rd June 1943.

C, which is known both unused and used in scarlet-vermilion.

For comparison see the 1861-62 1/- rose-lake.

Reproduction "A"

- (i) There is a dot in the "J" of "JOHN" (Plate 16).

Reproduction "B"

- (ii) The "O" of "JOHN" is irregular at top.

- (iii) There is a small break in the frame over the "W" of "NEW."

- (iv) The top right of the "N" of "NEW" is not cut square but slopes diagonally to the right (Plate 16).

- (v) The top of the "L" of "LAND" is rough.

- (vi) There is a smear on the right leg of the "N" of "SHILLING."

Reproduction "C."

- (vii) The stamp appears to be re-entered at foot. There is doubling of the letters of "POSTAGE."

- (viii) There is a dot in the right of the "H" and in the top of the "S" of "JOHN'S."

- (ix) There is a dot in the top of the "O" and a coloured spot in the cheek of the first "D" of "FOUND" (Plate 16).

- (x) There are two dots in the "O" and one in the "S" of "POST."

- (xi) The bar of "A" of "AGE" is weak and sometimes missing.

- (xii) There is a dot in the upper diagonal of the "N" in "SHILLING" and a heavy dot in the right leg.

PAPUA

1901 TWO SHILLINGS & SIXPENCE

PLATE 14

Sperati is known to have made "die" proofs of the frame in colour, and probably made unused and used reproductions on genuine paper. This cliché is dated the 9th November 1941.

It is almost certain that only the frame of a genuine low value (probably the ½d. or 2½d.) would be faded out and the 2/6 reproduction superimposed. The student should not overlook the fact that any one of the following scarce to rare stamps may have resulted from the production:—1901/05 2/6 with horizontal watermark on thick and with vertical watermark on thick or thin paper. 1903/07 overprinted large "Papua," thick paper vertical watermark and overprinted small "Papua" thick paper vertical watermark.

The sheet position reproduced is No. 23. Compare the frame with that of the cheaper 2/6 overprinted "Papua."

PRINTING: The genuine stamp is engraved while Sperati's reproduction is photography.

COLOUR DL: The genuine brown, Sperati has rather more red in comparison.

IMPRESSION: The Sperati is nearly as clear as the genuine.

SPECIFIC TESTS

Comparison with the genuine stamp reveals an immediate difference and the ovals containing the value are almost of equal depth all over while the genuine shows a wide variation in the depth, the rim of the ovals and that part near the figures "2" and "6" being substantially deeper than the other parts.

- (i) In the bottom left oval there is a small indentation at two-thirty o'clock in the solid background.

- (ii) There is a small curved line emerging from the head of the left "2" (Plate 14).

- (iii) On the top right side of the "O" in the right "POSTAGE" there is a small snail-like projection which is only to be found on the twenty-third position of the sheet in the genuine (Plate 14).

CANCELLATIONS

1. "B N G" of SAMARAI as illustrated. The letters are redrawn and the oval crudely retouched on the right.