

THE WORK OF JEAN DE SPERATI II

SAN MARINO

Jean de Sperati's earliest efforts at forging were directed to the stamps of San Marino, on behalf of his stamp dealer brother, Massimo, who specialized in this country. Some of these forgeries were previously attributed to Jean's photographer brother, Mariano, but it is probable that they were all done by Jean. Most, if not all of them are believed also to have been offered for sale by Erasmo Oneglia of Turin. Oneglia's price lists and an approval selection from Massimo de Sperati (see *Sperati I*, pages 13-15) suggest the range of Sperati's forgeries of San Marino.

Those of Sperati's San Marino forgeries which were made and sold before 1919 are generally much too brown when viewed under ultraviolet light on the reverse. It was at that time that ultraviolet came into use for examining postage stamps, so subsequently he developed additives to the paper which eliminated this problem to a great extent. A common fault of most of these forgeries is that, being made by photo-lithography before Sperati began retouching his forgeries of typographed stamps to simulate a typographic wave, they lack this wave.

Of the first issue, the following are believed to have been forged: 10c blue, 20c vermilion (two types), 30c brown, 40c mauve, 65c chestnut ('92), 1 lira red and yellow ('92), 1 lira pale ultramarine ('95), 2 lire brown and buff ('94) and 5 lire lake and blue ('94).

Of the 1892 surcharges, the 5c on 10c blue, 5c on 30c brown and 10c on 20c vermilion were apparently forged.

Of the 1903 issue, the 20c brown orange, 1 lira olive green, 2 lire bright violet, and 5 lire steel-blue were apparently forged.

Of the 1897 postage dues, evidently the 1, 5 and 10 lire were forged.

Only the 1903 one lira olive green and 5 lire steel-blue are described in *Sperati I*.

Several of the other forgeries can now be described, the majority of which originated from Sperati's daughter after his death or from Sperati directly. In addition, four examples come from the reference collection of Maurizio Raybaudi. The stamps are on genuine paper with genuine watermark and perforation, an impression of a genuine stamp having been faded out. The cancellations are genuine, but often seem weak.

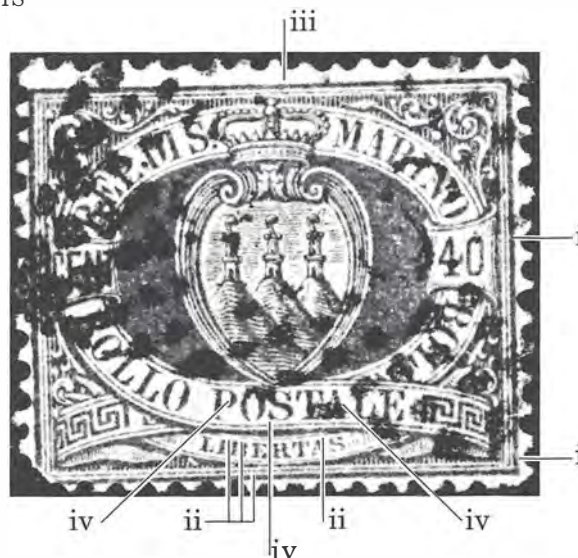
1877 Forty Centesimi (Photographic Plate D)

A single used example, on genuine watermarked paper, has been examined. It is a very dangerous forgery. The colour is a light mauve. The cancellation appears to be genuine, a large "S", 5.75 mm tall, in a grid of dots. The typographic wave is missing. The following specific tests may not be constant, since only one copy was available for study.

THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a white nick on the inside of the right frame line, to the right of the top of the numerals "40". This same frame line thickens to its inside, starting one mm from the bottom of the forgery.
- (ii) The inner, thin frame line is broken below the left side of the "E" of "LIBERTAS". The thin line above this word is broken above the "I", the "B" and the "A" of this word.
- (iii) The outer frame line is nicked on the top and on the bottom to the NE of the cross.
- (iv) "P" of "POSTAGE" has a white spot in the middle of its loop on the right. The "A" of this word has a 0.5 mm white line toward the top of its right leg. The "S" has a coloured dot on its tail at the left.

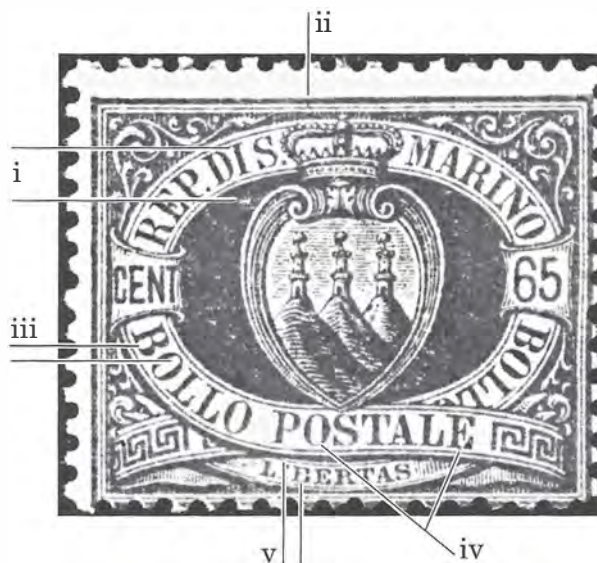


1892 Sixty Five Centesimi (Photographic Plate D)

Three unused examples on genuine watermarked paper have been examined. The colour is Indian red. The forgeries are photo-lithographs and lack the typographic wave of the genuine. In general the printing is somewhat blotchy and is probably a very early Sperati effort. The flaws are, however, quite constant as is typical with Sperati's technique. The question arises as to why Sperati made a forgery of such a common stamp.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a sizable white blotch in the background one mm below the "I" of "DI S". This letter "I" has a bite out of its upright, just below the left upper serif.
- (ii) The outer two top frame lines are joined by a coloured dot 9.75 mm from the left edge.
- (iii) A small coloured dot is in the white lower part of the "B" of "BOLLO", to the lower right; another is toward the top of the white space in the first "O" of this word.
- (iv) A coloured dot is at the bottom of the white space in the "O" of "POSTALE"; a larger one is attached to the middle of the lower limb of the "E" of this word.
- (v) There is no central bar in the "B" of "LIBERTAS". The thin line above this word has breaks above the "I" and "B".
- (vi) The horizontal shading lines behind the three mountains in the centre are much thicker than in the genuine stamps.



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1892 One, Two and Five Lire; Five Cents on Thirty Cents (Photographic Plate D)

A single copy of each of these values is in the reference collection of the Italian expert, Maurizio Raybaudi. These forgeries are not of the same origin as those from Sperati's archives, but they are believed to be by Sperati because they are of stamps he forged and they are of a quality suggestive of his productions. They are on genuine paper with genuine cancellations. The backs of all four are much browner under the ultraviolet light than are the genuine. The typographic wave is missing. Because only a single copy of each has been available for examination the specific tests may not be constant:

One lira, carmine and yellow

The colour of the forgery is carmine rose on yellow. The yellow is lighter than the genuine. The loss of white space is noticeable.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) The white ornaments at the corners by the value labels are much too small.
- (ii) There is a coloured dot NW of the "O" of "MARINO".
- (iii) The "E" of "LIRE" has a bite out of its lower left side.
- (iv) There are two coloured dots in the first "O" of "BOLLO", one over the other.
- (v) There are two coloured dots between the two "L's" of "BOLLO", horizontally placed.
- (vi) A coloured dot is on the line below the "LI" of "LIBERTAS".
- (vii) The vertical white "teeth" in the coloured, solid design at the bottom (inside the two frame lines) are missing on both the left and right sides.

THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

Two lire, brown on yellow

The colours of the forgery match the genuine. The loss of white space is noticeable.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) The thick vertical lines, just below the top two frame lines, are merged in many places.
- (ii) The "T" of "DI S" has a nick in its top.
- (iii) The "L" of "LIRE" has an outline to its left and beneath it.
- (iv) A coloured dot is on the frame line enclosing "BOLLO", to the left of its "B".
- (v) A coloured diagonal line connects the left top arm of the "T" of "POSTALE" with the left side of the vertical of this letter.
- (vi) "B" of the upside down "BOLL" on the right side of the stamp has a coloured cloud beneath its bottom serif (to its left).



Five lire, violet on green

The forgery is claret on very pale green. The edge of the green background is uneven.

- (i) There is a small white dot just below the middle in the "I" of "MARINO".
- (ii) The vertical lines in the border above the crown are merged in many places.
- (iii) A coloured dot is between the tops of the "IR" of "LIRE".
- (iv) There is a white dot in the vertical of the "T" of "POSTALE".



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5c on 30 centesimi, brown

The forgery is a darker brown than the genuine.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a small dent in the top of the "D" of "DIS". A coloured dot is on the bottom of the right serif of the "I" of this word.
- (ii) The bottoms of the "IN" of "MARINO" are connected.
- (iii) The lower right corner has a small downward projection.
- (iv) There is a dot on the upper serif of the "E" of "POSTAGE".
- (v) There is a break in the bottom inner (thin) frame line at the right.
- (vi) The surcharge on the copy examined is Gibbons type (5) and is forged. It is not typographed, as it should be.



THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

1903 *Twenty Centesimi* (Photographic Plate D)

Only a single copy, signed by Sperati, has been available for study, so the specific tests may not be constant. The forgery is lithographed while the genuine is typographed. It is in a pale orange colour on genuine paper with a genuine partial circular cancellation, showing “DI S. MA” on a corner of the stamp.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a dot of colour on the curved line below the “LI” of “LIBERTAS”. The serif at the top left of the vertical stroke of the “R” of this word is too strong and too large. The curved line after the “S” of this word closes back on the frame line enclosing “LIBERTAS”, as in some genuine copies.
- (ii) The upper right corner ornament has its right side sloping inward, from top to bottom, more strongly than in most genuine.
- (iii) The “N” and “T” of “CENT” almost touch at the top.
- (iv) The outline of the letters “BOLLO POSTALE” is rough.



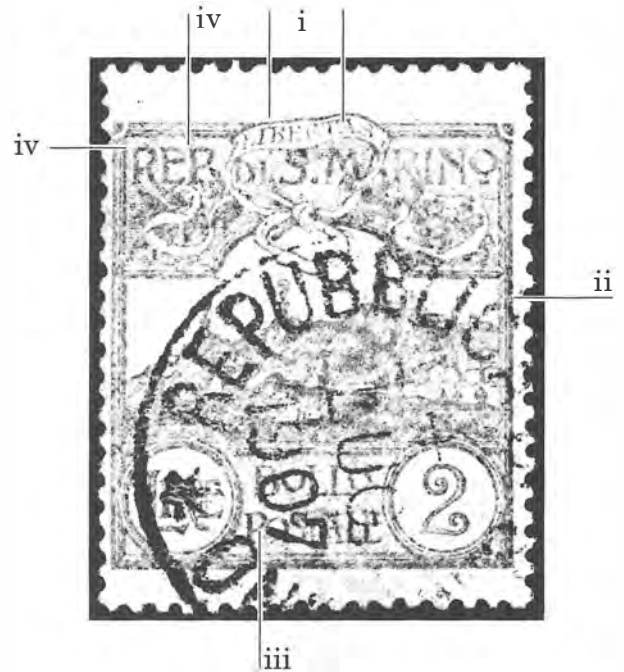
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1903 Two Lire (Photographic Plate D)

Only a single copy, signed by Sperati, has been available for study, so the specific tests may not be constant. It is lithographed rather than typographed as the genuine. It is in a weak grey-lilac colour on genuine paper with a genuine partial circular cancellation, showing "...NO * REPUBBLICA" under "4/LUG/1907" on the stamp.

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) The left end of the upper serif of the "B" of "LIBERTAS" is connected to the frame line above it by a vertical line. Both sides of the "A" of this word are broken just above its horizontal bar.
- (ii) There is a dent in the outside of the right outer frame line 9.4 mm from the top.
- (iii) There are two white spots in the loop of the "P" of "POSTALE", one at the right at mid-height and one at the top right.
- (iv) In "REP" the "R" has a rounded upper left centre. The "P" has a weak to non-existent serif on its upper arm.
- (v) All the lettering is weaker than the genuine with small blotches.



THE PREVIOUSLY UNLISTED FORGERIES

1897 Postage Due: One, Five and Ten Lire (Photographic Plate D)

Single examples of the 1 and 5 lire, and two of the 10 lire, have been studied. All are cancelled, apparently genuinely, are on genuine watermarked paper, and have been signed by Sperati. The colours of the frames are all the same, claret; the values are brown. They lack the typographic wave of the genuine. The 5 lire and one 10 lire have matching frames which are designated as Reproduction A. The copy of the 1 lira and one of the 10 lire have matching frames and are designated as Reproduction B. When the latter two were sold by Sperati in 1956, he told the purchaser that they were “early tests” of his.

Reproduction Frame A

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) There is a small white dot low in the vertical of the “I” of “DI”. There is a small cloud of colour below the left leg of the “A” of “MARINO”.
- (ii) There is a coloured dot at the top of the white line, below the right side of the second “S” of “SEGNATASSE”. This “S” has a forked tail at the bottom left.
- (iii) “R” of “LIBERTAS” has white spots in the lower part of its left leg. The second coloured frame below this word is pinched below the right side of the “R” and has a dent in its top, below the right side of the foot of “T”.



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Reproduction Frame B

SPECIFIC TESTS

- (i) The outer, top frame line has a white dot 0.5 mm from its left end. There is a major white flaw in the outer, left frame line 1.5 mm from its top.
- (ii) There is a break in the bottom of the loop of the “P” of “REPUB”. The bottom of the “D” of “DI” is broken where it joins the vertical. The bottom left serif of the “T” is broken away. The top of the “O” of “MARINO” is a series of dots.
- (iii) The first “A” of “SEGNATASSE” has a coloured dot in the upper right of its white triangle. The second “S” of this word has a coloured spur running up from the top of its lower tail. This letter has a coloured dot on its bottom, to the left, and there is a break in the fine line below it.
- (iv) The thick line between the two fine lines above “LIBERTAS” has a vertical white crack at its bottom, above the “E” of this word.
- (v) A small, coloured dot is in the white space above the bottom frame line and beneath the right leg of the “R” of “LIBERTAS”.
- (vi) The fine line below “LIBERTAS” is broken to the left of the “L”, below the right side of the “B”, and below “RT”.



Reproductions of the Numerals

SPECIFIC TESTS

- 1 lira: The under sides of the top serifs of the “L” slope upward toward the vertical. The “1” bulges downward on the bottom of its right side.
- 5 lire: The top of the “L” slopes upward, from left to right. There is a coloured dot just above the right side of the vertical of the “5”.
- 10 lire: The numerals of both copies are the same. The right serif of the “L” slopes upward to the right. There is a dent in the top of the “0” and a small bump on its right side, about 1 mm from its top.