

The Argentina 1935-51 Definitives

Regular and Official Issue Studies

2011

2

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Preface

In these notes I am collecting posts to the blog I have been maintaining dedicated to this issue. Here I show posts for the regular and official issues during 2010. Completing this series is a daunting endeavor. Through luck, perseverance, and thanks to low demand for these stamps, I have been able to assemble a voluminous reference collection with many rare items. I hope you learn from this study, and if you do not currently collect this issue, decide to collect it. If you have some of these stamps, I hope that you are able to differentiate the issues more accurately than by using the current catalogues.

Beginning collectors to this series encounter several stumbling blocks. The first stumbling block, which is encountered by collectors using the Scott catalogue, is that the stamps have been grouped using a scheme that is based on the major watermark types; ignoring the difference for the same watermark as used on the various papers, the variations within a watermark type, and the changes of other printing characteristics through 20 years of postal use. The second stumbling block, which collectors using the Argentinean specialized catalogues encounter, is that the issues have been grouped in a loosely chronological scheme that separates Argentinean papers from imported papers. I use a description scheme for the stamps that is independent of the catalogs. Those who have studied or collected this series for a few years have likely been confused by the catalog numbers. Most collectors in North America use the Scott catalogue, and most collectors in Argentina use the Petrovich and Kneitschel catalogs. These three catalogs have confusing numbering schemes and all do not differentiate all of the papers correctly. The Klass specialized Argentinean catalog comes closest to an accurate description of this issue, but misses a few papers. I unfortunately have not had time to describe the inaccuracies found in these catalogs. As of this updated edition a book by Pettigiani has been published that describes fairly well the papers for this series, yet even this advanced monograph does not completely capture what is known today. I unfortunately do not have time to compare my work to Pettigiani's in this update...I have only so much time available for stamp work these days.

Referring repeatedly to the Argentina 1935-51 Definitives lengthens the text needlessly. From here onwards I use the descriptor Arg3551 to refer to this series. In addition, I refer to the 'Servicio Oficial' as the 'SO' issues, and to the Departmental Official issues as the DEPOF issues.

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Design Review

In this section I give a brief tour of the designs, and show tables with the most significant features. These tables summarize information that I present in more detail in later sections.

Regular Issues



Value	Scheme	Printing	Theme	Colors	In Use
½ c	05c	Offset	Belgrano	Purple	1935 to 1940s
1 c	1c	Offset and Typographed	Sarmiento	Orange Brown	1935 to 1950s
2 c	2c	Offset	Urquiza	Dark Brown	1935 onwards
2 ½ c	2p5c	Offset	Braille	Dark Green	1939 to 1940s
3 c	3cSM	Offset	San Martin	Green	1935 to 1938
3 c	3cSM	Offset	San Martin	Gray	1939 to 1940s
4 c	4c	Offset	Brown	Green	1939 to 1940s
4 c	4c	Offset	Brown	Gray	1935 to 1938
3 c	3cM	Offset	Moreno	Olive Green	1943 to 1940s
5 c	5c	Offset	Moreno	Red Brown	1936 to 1938
5 c	5c	Typographed	Moreno	Red Brown	1937 to 1940
5 c	5c	Clay paper	Moreno	Red Brown	1941 to 1940s



Value	Scheme	Printing	Theme	Colors	In Use
6 c	6c	Offset	Alberdi	Olive Green	1935 to 1940s
8 c	8c	Offset	Avellaneda	Orange	1939 to 1940s
12 c	12cBR	Offset	Mitre	Brown	1935 to 1938
12 c	12cR	Offset	Mitre	Red	1939 to 1940s
10 c	10cR	Typographed	Rivadavia	Red	1935 to 1938
10 c	10cBR	Offset and Typographed	Rivadavia	Brown	1939 to 1961
15 c	15cSC	Offset	Cattle	Blue	1936 to 1940s
20 c	20cSC	Offset and Typographed	Cattle	Blue	1951 to 1950s
20 c	20cJMG/MG	Offset	Guemes	Blue	1935 to 1942
15 c	15cMG	Offset	Guemes	Blue	1942 to 1940s
20 c	20cLC	Offset	Cattle	Greenish Blue	1942 to 1950s
25 c	25c	Offset	Agriculture	Pink Red	1936 to 1950s



Value	Scheme	Printing	Theme	Colors	In Use
30 c	30c	Offset	Wool	Orange Brown and Yellow Brown	1936 to 1950s
1 peso	1pL	Offset	Map with boundaries	Brown and Blue	1936
1 peso	1p	Offset	Map without boundaries	Brown and Blue	1937 to 1940s
40 c	40c	Offset	Sugarcane	Purple and Reddish Purple	1936 to 1950s
50 c	50c	Offset	Oil Rig	Red and Orange	1936 to 1950s
5 pesos	5p	Offset	Iguazu	Navy Blue and Dark Green	1936 to 1950s
2 pesos	2p	Offset	Fruits	Red Brown and Blue	1936 to 1950s
10 pesos	10p	Offset	Grapes	Brown and Black	1936 to 1950s
20 pesos	20p	Offset	Cotton	Green and Brown	1936 to 1950s

Departmental Officials

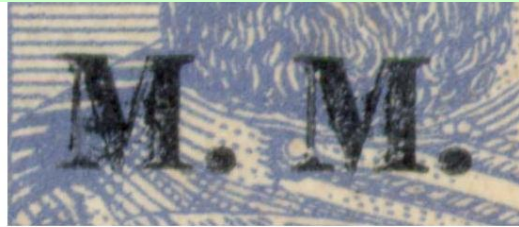
There are eight overprints representing departments, or ministries of the Argentinean government. These are:



M.J.I.: Justice and Public Instruction



M.M.: Navy



M.O.P.: Public Works



M.R.C.: External Relations and Culture



For the 1 peso stamp without map boundaries, the overprint is found along the top or the bottom of the stamp, as shown below.



There are at least 128 departmental official major issues. There are additional color varieties for the 10c Rivadavia Red, since types I and II were each printed in dark red, and then a lighter red. The 50 centavo and 1 peso with map boundaries (1pL) are very rare used or on cover and were issued in small quantities. I will use the contraction DEPOF to refer to these officials from here onwards. The 25c DEPOF is only found on the 1E2 paper, making it an ideal stamp to study and uniquely determine this paper.

Servicio Oficial

There overprints replaced the departmental officials in 1937/38. There are several types of placement of the overprint relative to the stamp design and two types of overprint. The earlier type is slightly wider (12 mm) than the later type, both shown below.



My reference scheme

I use my own reference scheme to describe Arg3551. This reference scheme enables me to have a more accurate and easy to reference listing of the issues. I consider it a temporary scheme until I am able to arrive at a fairly complete listing.

The scheme combines:

1. The denomination in a computer-friendly format: For example, instead of 1/2c I use 05c, and instead of 2 1/2 c, I use 2p5c.
2. Mention of the person on the stamp (optional) or name acronym: I need this naming convention for the 3 centavos stamp, which was issued with the San Martin (SM) and Mariano Moreno (M) designs. The 20c Martin Guemes was issued with (JMG) or without (MG) the middle name.
3. The color if it is a major change, such as from red to brown.
4. Reference to the paper: There are 30c1E1, 30c1E2, etc.
5. An additional reference for a specific plate: This naming convention is required for the 10c Rivadavia red, with types I and II, and the 10c Rivadavia Brown, with types A and B.
6. An additional reference for a change in color shade: This naming convention is required for the 15c Small Format Cattle, issued in dark blue and only on the 1E1 paper, as 15cSC-D, and also issued in light blue and on a later paper, as 15cSC-L.

I mention several examples that show how my naming convention works:

1. The 8c value was issued in one design, on one paper, on one plate, and on one color. Reference: 8c1E3. If in the future I find an 8c on the 1E4 paper, I can add it without having to re-scheme the 8c1E3.
2. The 10c Rivadavia was issued in red and a range of browns, on many papers, and on at least four plates. Example references: 10cR1E1-I, 10cBRCL1-A.

For the papers I use the following scheme:

1. The early papers with the first watermark are the 1Ex papers, with x as of this edition being 1 to 5, in use between 1935 and 1944.
2. The clay papers were printed in two groups of two papers each, CL1A and CL1B in 1943; and CL2A and CL2B in the 1950s. The 25c 'SO' on clay paper is on the CL3 paper.
3. The un-watermarked papers are of two types: grid from 1945 (NGR), and opaque from approximately 1948 (NOP).
4. The paper with the second watermark is found in two types: clear (2C), from 1949; and diffuse (2D), from 1943.
5. The late papers with the first watermark are the 1Lx papers, beginning in 1951, with x as of this edition being 1 to 6.

There are minor variations for some of these papers: two types of NOP, as well vertical and horizontal versions of the 2C and NGR.

Introduction

When I purchased two small boxes tightly packed with approximately 100,000 used Argentinean stamps, approximately half of which were 1935-51 definitives, from Estudio20 in 1993, I could not have imagined that this one purchase would lead to the major philatelic endeavor of my life. Neither could I have imagined that the Internet, specifically eBay, would be the second major event in my quest to form as complete and expansive a collection of the Argentina 1935-51 definitive series-Arg3551-as it is possible for a person of limited means. The third event that has proved seminal to this study is the Washington 2006 world exhibition. I was fortunate to view a thoroughly studied exhibit of this issue by Moscatelli, from which I learned of the complexity of the papers, and of several un-catalogued varieties I was unaware of.

Upon finishing the first edition of the first book, in 2007, I realized that my knowledge of this issue was still very limited. I needed to study the stamps using what I had learned from the Moscatelli exhibit. I especially needed to completely scope out the sixteen watermarked and two un-watermarked papers and their minor variations and I needed to connect with other specialists. In April 2008, I came across a Web Forum hosted by Argentinean philatelists. This fourth event has enabled me to check many of my results with helpful experts in Argentina, and has also enabled me to work on this study in Spanish. Because of time constraints, I have regretfully limited this book to the English version.

The Argentina 1935-51 definitive series is one of the most beautiful definitive series of the 20th Century. Placing the large format values next to comparably valued definitives issued by other countries in 1935 proves this point decisively. Argentina was unable to replace this definitive series with equally beautiful stamps, and it would remain for other countries in subsequent decades to issue definitives that are as attractive and collectable: the Mexico Exporta series of 1976-1993 and the Germany Women and Sites series of 1986-2002.

The Argentina 1935-51 definitive series is one of the most difficult definitive series of the 20th Century to study. During twenty years of use, this series was issued in 18 major papers, was printed using two printing techniques-off set and typographed, and underwent design changes and color changes. A minimally complete collection of the regular issues consists of approximately 100 stamps, and for the official stamps, of approximately 150 stamps. Some plates show significant wear in their late printings. There are many major plating varieties, and a large number of minor varieties. Proofs and printer's waste specimens abound. There are also errors-doubled printings, printed on the gum, misperfed, and imperfs; perfins; postal entires, postal forgeries ... a life's worth of study.

How this series came about

The Deluca book, published by the Argentinean Post Office, Volume I, in 1939, by Antonio Deluca, and titled "Stamps and other postal and telegraph issues" contains key information about Arg3551, about which Deluca mentions the following:

The decision to replace the San Martin issue by a new series came from 1931, but was abandoned due to the Argentinean Post Office 's economic hardship. Its director, Mr. Carlos Risso Dominguez, sent a memorandum to the Ministry of the Interior, dated November 28, 1932, in which he outlines basic facts about this series that I did not know before I obtained this book. The basic facts contained in this memorandum are:

1. There were several postal forgery incidents that cost the Argentinean Post Office a large loss of revenue. "In 1921 a postal forgery of the 5c stamp was found, and it incurred a loss of approximately 1 million pesos of national currency in a few months. There seems to be an additional forgery of higher quality and affecting the 2c and 5c values. It is then without doubt that the prolonged use of the same stamp type conspires against its legitimacy and affects adversely our collection of revenue."
2. Four categories were proposed for the new issue:

"a) Publish the likenesses of those signing the Declaration of Independence..."

"b) Publish the likenesses of those signing the 1853 Constitution..."

"c) Publish a selection of the likenesses of important military and civilian figures...and in addition add symbolic figures representing the Republic as shown on our currency, and mainly the Argentinean shield in its authentic model."

"d) Finally...use the stamps for an increased awareness of our products and therefore put in effect a news-worthy promotion in its favor, just as other countries do..."

There then take place several bureaucratic steps typically required for a new stamp series: authorization by the Ministry of the Interior, design contest, and authorization by the President of the Republic. The second memorandum containing facts about this series was sent by the commission making recommendations on this new issue to the Argentinean Post Office on July 4 1933:

1. " The commission proposes the portraits for the following important figures to be featured in as many issues: San Martin, Rivadavia, Moreno, Belgrano, Sarmiento, Mitre, Urquiza, Rodriguez, Guemes, Velez Sarsfield. Within the context of promoting, the commission indicates, of course, the map of the Argentinean Republic, and the following industries: Cattle, Agriculture, Oil, Wine-making, and Sugar Cane."
2. This memorandum recommends the use of paper without watermark, somewhat thicker than the one being used at the time for typographed printing, and with white gum. It is interesting that the characteristics in this recommendation correspond to only one of the 18 papers for Arg3551: the NOP, or opaque paper not in the catalogs from approximately 1948.
3. The recommended dimensions are: 19 by 24 mm, and 21 by 28 mm.

4. The designs and initial printing quantities recommended are:

1/2c Urquiza (50 millions); 1c Guemes (30 millions); 3c Rodriguez (120 millions); 5c Agriculture (60 millions); 6c Sarmiento (40 millions); 10c Belgrano (300 millions); 15c Map (20 millions); 20c Mitre (10 millions); 30c Sugar (12 millions); 35c Cattle (6 millions); 40c Wine-making (10 millions); 50c Velez Sarsfield (6 millions); 1p Oil Industry (2.5 millions); 5p Rivadavia (50000), 10p Moreno (20000), 20p San Martin (10000).

5. Only one design is recommended for the official issues, with each denomination having its own color: "The current system is unappealing and very costly, because it forces specialized printings of the overprints. In addition, the wide range of papers and printings of the stamps and of the very same overprints, cause that collectors seek them, causing a dysfunctional inventory, given that they cannot be acquired at post offices..." This memorandum includes other details about the official issues, including proposed values and printing quantities.

The Casa de Moneda (the Argentinean Treasury, in charge of printing stamps) makes the following design and respective denomination recommendations to the Argentinean Post Office on May 23, 1934:

Mitre 1/2c y 1c; Sarmiento 2c; Moreno 10c; Belgrano 5c y 20c; Southern National Park 12c; Sugar 10c; Argentinean Republic, wheat 15c; America and the Argentinean Republic, fruits of the country 5c; Oil 2c; Agriculture 10c; Republic and the farmer 5c; Christ of the Andes 2c; Republic and Shield 12c; Wheat Stalks 5c y 10c; Allegorical figure and wheat 10c; Iguazu Falls 50c. The most interesting fact in this memorandum is mention of Iguazu Falls. This memorandum mentions many designs that were not adopted.

Deluca mentions documents that relate to collaboration between the Argentinean Treasury and the Argentinean Post Office, in which the adopted characteristics are outlined: the use of a small format for the values up to 20c, and of the large format for values 25c and up.

On July 16 of 1934 the Patriot values as we know them from 1/2c to 20c were finalized. Durante the period spanning October 25, 1934 and February 13, 1935 the Resources values as we know them from 25c to 20 pesos were finalized.

On September 14, 1935, the Argentinean Post Office took the following actions:

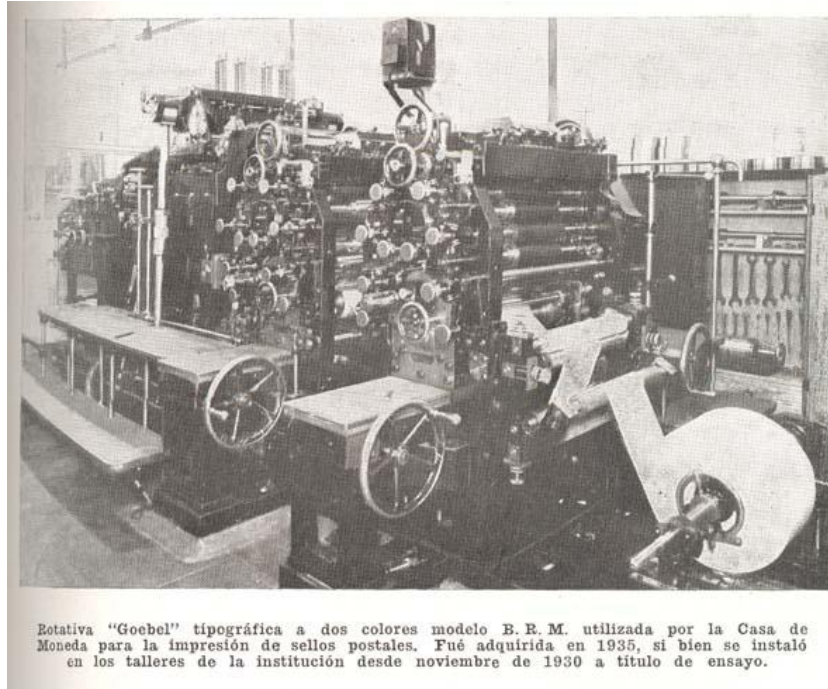
1. Decides to issue on October 1, 1935 the 1/2c, 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 6c, 10c, 12c, y 20c (full name version: JMG) values.
2. Demonetizes from January 1, 1936 onwards the previous (San Martin) issue.
3. Allows the exchange of San Martin stamps for the new stamps during the first 90 days of 1936.

On November 22, 1935, the Argentinean Post Office decides to issue the 15c, 25c, 30c, 40c, 50c, 1p with map boundaries, 2p, 5p, 10p, and 20p values January 1, 1936.

According to Deluca, public notice of the new issue "was made by special announcements, and

the printing of 5000 stamps for each value." I speculate that these stamps are the ones we come across with specimen ("MUESTRA") overprint.

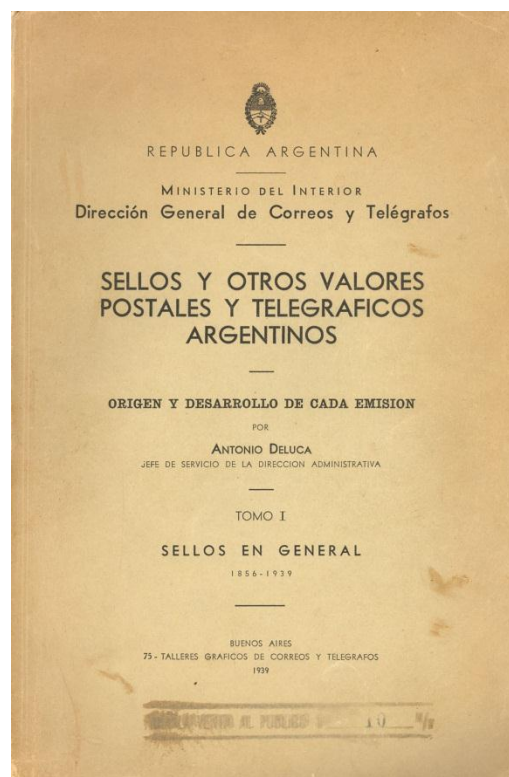
The Deluca book has a picture of the printing press used to print these stamps.



The caption reads "Two color typographic rotary press 'Goebel' model B.P.M. used by the Mint (Casa de la Moneda) to print postal stamps. It was acquired in 1935, even if installed in its printing shop ("taller") since November 1930 in test mode ("a título de ensayo")."

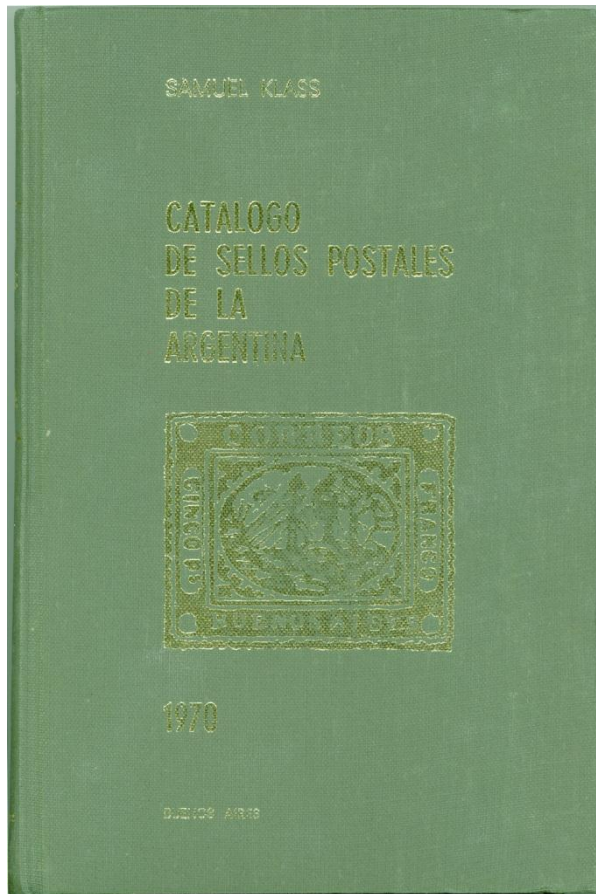
Catalogs and other References

The only primary reference I have for Arg3551 is the book published by the Argentinean postal authorities in 1939, and authored by Antonio Deluca. It is the first volume of two and the second volume I have been told does not cover postage stamps. This book contains various design details, printing quantities for the 1 peso with map boundaries, and transcripts of interesting official documents for Arg3551. The classic specialized catalog of Argentina, written by Victor Kneitschel, is an important secondary source. There are several editions, all printed in small runs. I have the 1951 copy, which is sufficient for my needs, although I would like to have the two volume edition published a few years later. This catalog has a reasonable listing of the regular issues, and a thorough listing of the official issues-the latter is the most complete listing at my disposal.

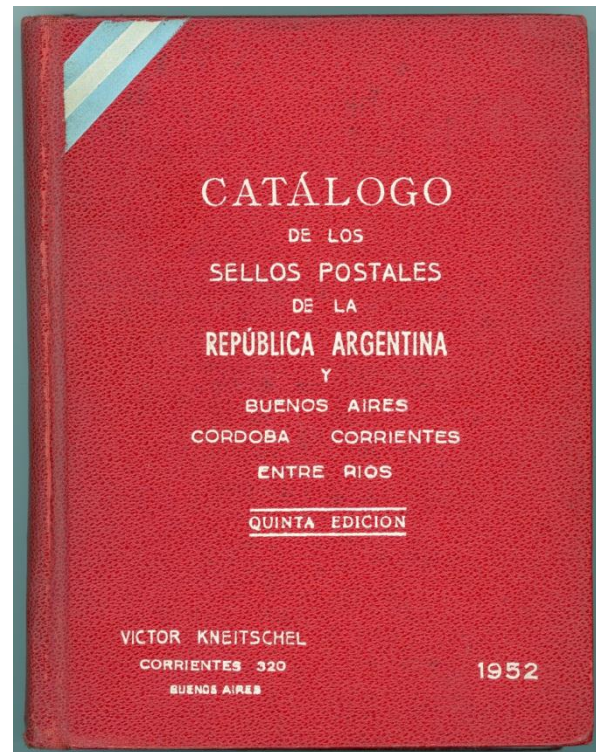


The specialized catalog written by Samuel Klass is my most important secondary source for the regular issues. It contains the most complete reference to all sorts of varieties and a few earliest use mentions. Klass has a summarized listing of the Arg3551 officials. The catalog that is most often quoted on the Web Forum is referred to as Petrovich, although it is currently published by Mello Teggia. The Mello Teggia numbers get quoted as Pt, for Petrovich. The Mello Teggia catalog is dated 1998 and has a 2000 supplement. This catalog is a direct descendant of Kneitschel. I also have access to scans of the Uniphila catalog for the Arg3551 regular issues. The Uniphila catalog describes the papers as well as Klass does.

Klass 1971



Kneitschel 1952



The reason why I abandoned the use of all catalogs and went to the stamps is because only the stamps tell the correct story. I have gone through the cycle for each of these publications as follows:

1. Oh, great, this catalog has a classification I can use.
2. Ooops, I see a mistake here.....
3. Ooops, this is way off the mark.....
4. Wait, what happened to this paper? It is not even mentioned.
5. I am done, next!

I have reviewed a detailed analysis of the papers by Bardi. The Bardi material is very thorough, but following my test with the 50c stamps, of which I have several thousand, I realized that even this most advanced of classifications has confusing inconsistencies. Bardi gets pretty far, but not far enough. I even started a table that compared the papers I find with Bardi's findings and realized that his table is incomplete/inconsistent. With the limited amount of time at my disposal I can figure the stamps out quicker by looking at them than by translating those awful

Petrovich catalog numbers and Bardi's use of the m and M symbols to describe which way the watermark reads.

A complete critique of the catalogs is a subject worth pursuing, but it is lower priority for me because I still have not figured the series out to my satisfaction. Your comments on the watermarks have thankfully helped me move to a higher level of understanding: thanks!!!

This is my take on the catalogs at my disposal:

1. Scott is only useful to buy stamps on ebay because the numbers are used there. A few points:
a...The prices are not self-consistent. For example, the 1/2 centavo Straight Rays, the 05c2D, is extremely rare, but priced way lower than the relatively common 5 pesos unwatermarked grid, the 5pNGR. Every time I see a 5pNGR mint on ebay I roll my eyes.....it is always described as the greatest stamp of the series, and one comes up every month! It is even relatively common on cover.

b...The 20 pesos Scott 450 is really several stamps (1E1, 1E2, 1E3, 1E4 and two 1Ls), of which the first one, the one from 1936 20p1E1, is at least 10 times scarcer than most of the other ones. Scott does list the 20 pesos clay of 1943, but lists it as 'typographed,' which it may be, but the major distinction is that it is from the CL1B clay printing of 1943, which includes several unlisted values: 30c, 40c, and 2 pesos. The great rarity of the series is the 2 pesos CL1B from 1943. I came across this stamp randomly when I noticed the shiny look of it on a cover from World War II when I knew that the other clay is printed on very different colors and circulated in 1952.....I could go on and on.....

2. Klass/Kneitschel/Ediphila/Petrovich (now Mello-Tegglia) have combined a lot of additional information. Of these, Klass is the closest to a complete categorization for the regular issues, and Kneitschel for the officials. This is the reason why I have not uploaded the official section of Klass to my site, only that from Kneitschel. All share two characteristics that are very annoying and distracting:

a...A separation of the papers between foreign and Argentinean, even though it is unclear where this information came from. We know the Zarate papers, 1L5, are from Argentina and not much else. As I mentioned before, the catalogs can't even agree if it was Canada, England, the U.S., or the Netherlands. Deluca is the only reference I trust because it was published by the post office using official post office documentation. Deluca mentions nothing about the country of origin of the papers. Do we really know that the 1E2 came from Austria? There is work to be done here because, as you point out, if we know the country we can know more about the paper.

b...The numbering is universally confusing. Bardi used the Petrovich scheme, now adopted by Mello-Tegglia, and it is the most confusing one of all. I have an excel spreadsheet with all of the numbers that at some point I would like to publish just to make the point.

I am not necessarily selling my scheme, but because it is non-sequential, I can change it as I figure out the series without having to renumber everything. For example, we do not know if

any of the small format stamps were printed on the 1E2 paper. Every small format stamp I have come across from 1935 to 1944 is printed on 1E1, 1E3, 1E4, 2D and the two CL1 papers. If I find, say, the 3c San Martin Green on 1E2 paper, I can just call it 3cSMGr1E2, and I am done.

In addition, there may be a 1E6 paper from the early 1940s that may come out of these better measurements you are making, and a 1L6 paper.....Moscatelli mentions a third narrow (short rays) Straight Rays paper, which I called 2N but never looked for....much work left to do here.

And the officials are even more poorly categorized. It is easy to find the 30c departmentals on the 1E1 and 1E2 papers, yet no catalog mentions that there are two distinct papers. All 25c departmentals are 1E2!

To conclude, my over-arching plan is to let the stamps do the talking, and once I have made significant progress, I will come back to all of these catalogs and map them to my findings. To get the classification right, in my humble opinion, we have to look at all aspects at once:

1. PPGW: paper, perforation, gum, and watermark.
2. postal use from singles, blocks, and covers.
3. plate varieties that can help us separate early plates from late plates.

General Comments about the Papers

During the World Philatelic Exhibition held in Washington D.C. in 2006 I came across the great collection of arg3551 formed by Moscatelli. It is from his exhibit that I learned of the 16 watermarked papers. I was already aware of the two un-watermarked papers. Arg3551 is very difficult to classify because of the large number of papers that were used. A great aid in the identification of these papers is that the papers were used mostly in chronological order, and with dated specimens it is relatively easy to narrow down to one or two candidates to finally arrive at the correct paper.

Collectors that use the Scott catalog will be most surprised to find that this classification is completely off the mark. The Scott numbers are only useful because they are used in ebay! Here is how Scott went wrong:

1. The first group in Scott is composed of stamps with the RA in Sun with Wavy Rays, in short, the Wavy Rays watermark. This watermark was used on at least five regular papers between 1935 and 1944, and on at least five other regular papers between 1950 and 1961. This watermark was also used on four clay papers issued approximately in 1939, 1943, 1950, and 1952. When Scott refers to an 'a' item as typographed for the 10c Brown, for example, it is grouping four clay papers into one item.
2. The second group in Scott is composed of stamps with the RA in Sun with Straight Rays, in short, the Straight Rays watermark. This watermark was used on two regular papers. The first paper, from 1943, has a diffused watermark and is very difficult to type. The

1/2c Straight Rays, one of the great rarities of this series, is printed on this paper. The second paper is bright has a clear watermark and was used mostly in 1949 and 1950.

3. The third group in Scott is composed of un-watermarked stamps. There are two papers in this group: a paper with a grid pattern and an opaque paper without a pattern.

The Kneitschel catalog does not do much better than Scott, which may mean that Scott used Kneitschel as a basis for the Scott categorization. The Klass catalog is the best one to date in classifying the papers. However, the Klass catalog fails to mention several papers.

Some general comments about the papers:

1. The assumption that there is a Wavy Rays watermark and a Straight Rays watermark is questionable. I use these two references only to simplify the subject. In reality, most of the watermarked papers have a unique watermark. The exception is the watermark shared by the 1E1, 1E3, and 1L1 papers. The 1E2 watermark is a hybrid between the 1E1 Wavy Rays and the 2D Straight Rays. The 1E4 watermark is a hybrid between the 1E1 Wavy Rays and the 2C Straight Rays.
2. Even though I originally labeled the 1E and 1L papers to mean that the 1 referred to Wavy Rays, it is more reasonable to use the 1 as a category number, and not as a reference to the type of watermark. By this I mean that the 1E papers are in a category of 5 papers with 4 distinctly different watermarks, and the 1L papers are in a category with 5 papers each with a unique watermark, one of which is shared with the first category of Wavy Rays papers.
3. The paper has three characteristics: (a) the consistency and color of the pulp, be it opaque, white, gray; (2) the watermark as defined by its dimensions; (3) the grid, when discernible, and the relative angles of the rows of dots or ellipses, when discernible. I used these three characteristics to refer to each paper because all need to be used to classify the papers.
4. The vertical and horizontal versions of some of the watermarks should be from rolls of paper that were manufactured differently. It may be determined in the future that the two types are two separate watermarks.

Quick Review of the 1E Papers

The first group of papers is of a regular type-that is, do not have a high clay content, and were in use between 1935 and 1944. I refer to these papers as the 1E1, 1E2, 1E3, 1E4, and 1E5. I have found that the first four papers are relatively easy to classify. The 1E5 paper and perhaps one or two additional papers used between 1942 and 1944 that I may have failed to classify are rare and can be easily confused with the previous papers issued. The two examples shown here are the best stamps to use to learn about these two papers. The 1 peso with map boundaries was only issued on the 1E paper, and all 25c DEPOF were issued on the 1E2 paper.



1E1

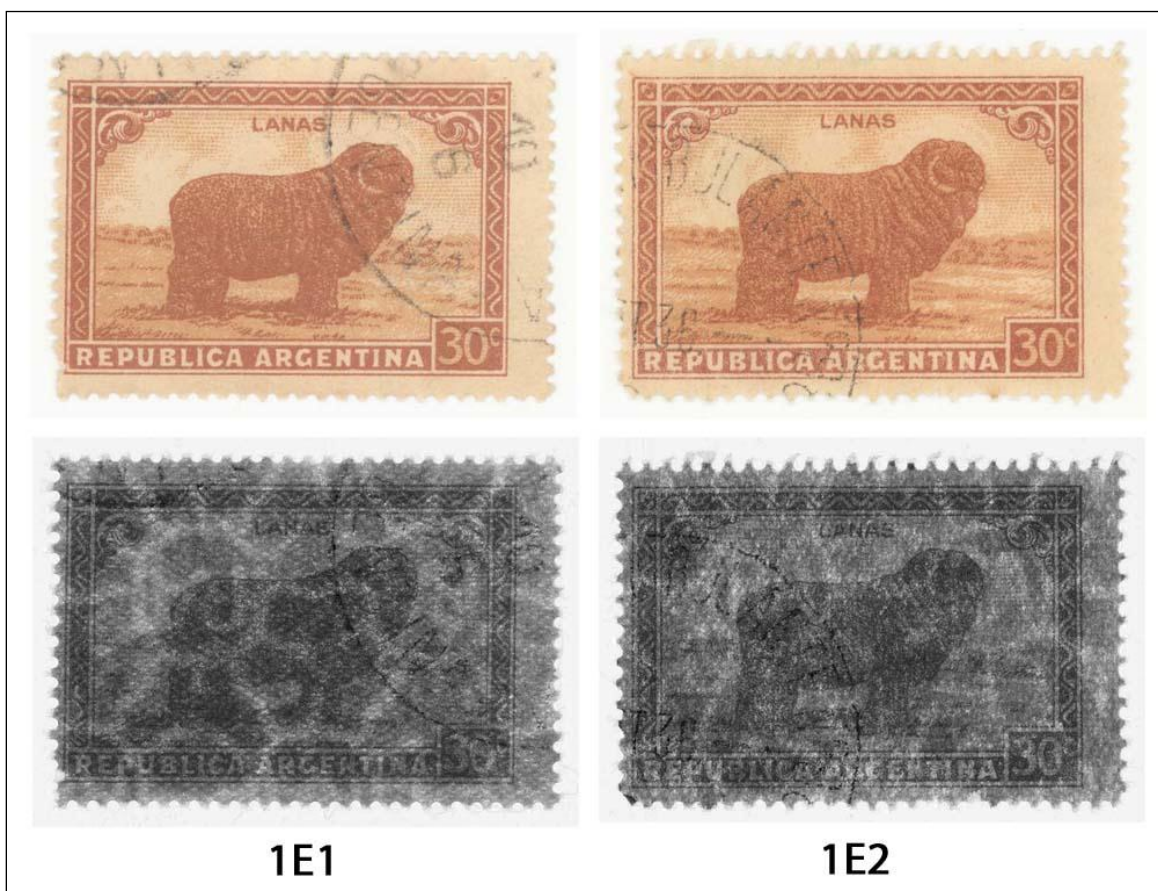


1E2

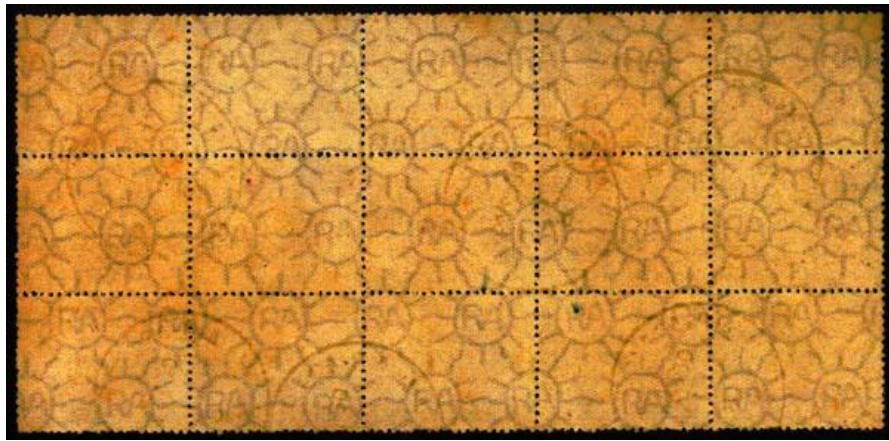
There are three characteristics that are optimal conditions that help the identification effort in reference to the papers:

1. The stamps printed on lighter colors are most translucent.
2. Because most of these stamps were in high demand for postal use from as soon as they were issued, they are found used within a short time period from the first date of sale. This is why dated specimens are very useful to define the usage range for each paper.
3. The stamps that received high postal use provide us with large numbers of specimens that can be acquired at an affordable price.

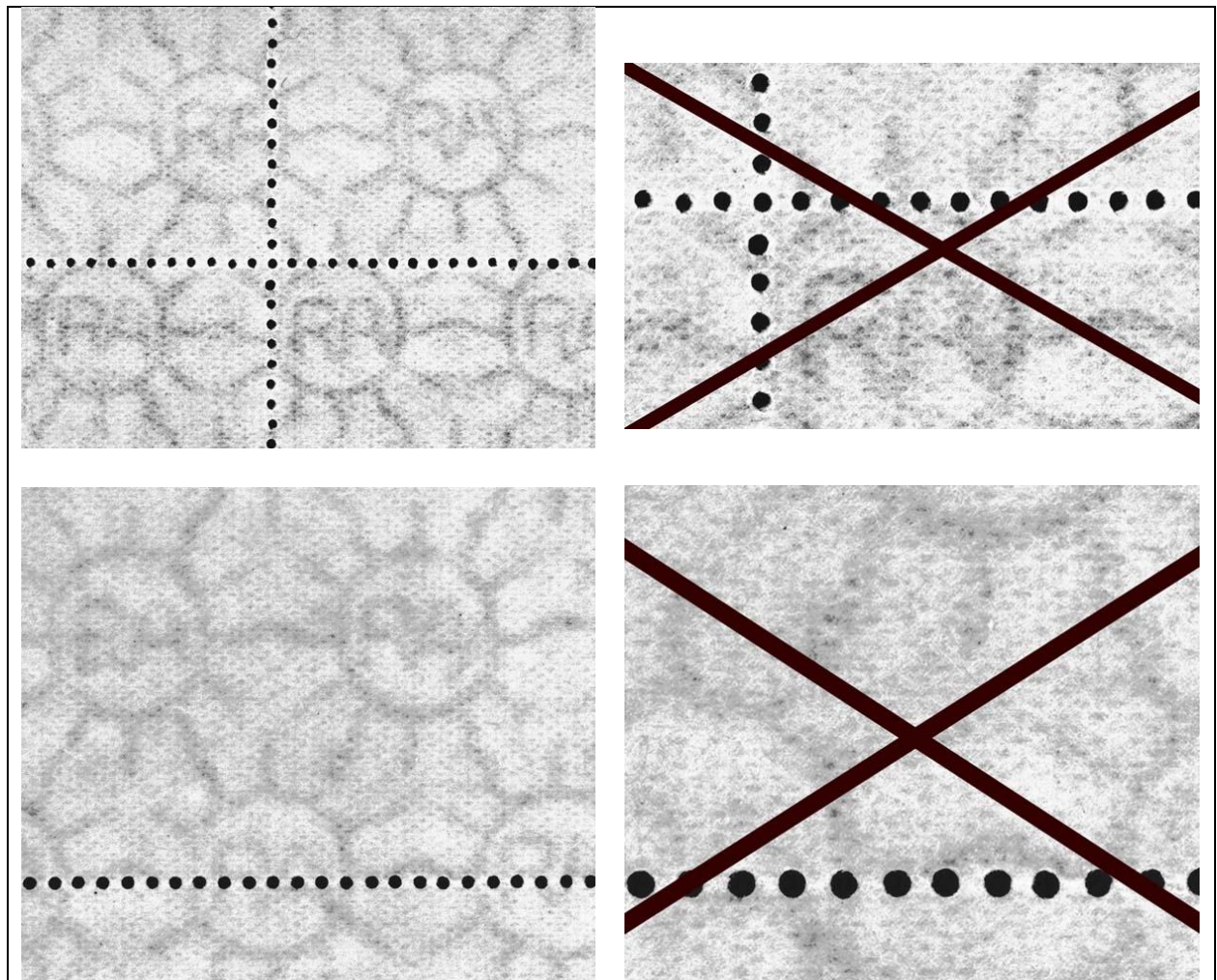
The 25c, 30c, and 50c values satisfy these three optimal conditions. Each of these values received high postal use during different time periods because of changes to the postal rates. I find the 25c to be most common between 1939 and 1943, the 30c between 1936 and 1943, and the 50c between 1951 and 1956. Therefore, the 30c is great for the 1E1 and 1E2 papers; the 25c for the 1E3, 1E4, and 1E5 papers; and the 50c for the 1L papers. Here are two 30c specimens from 1936.

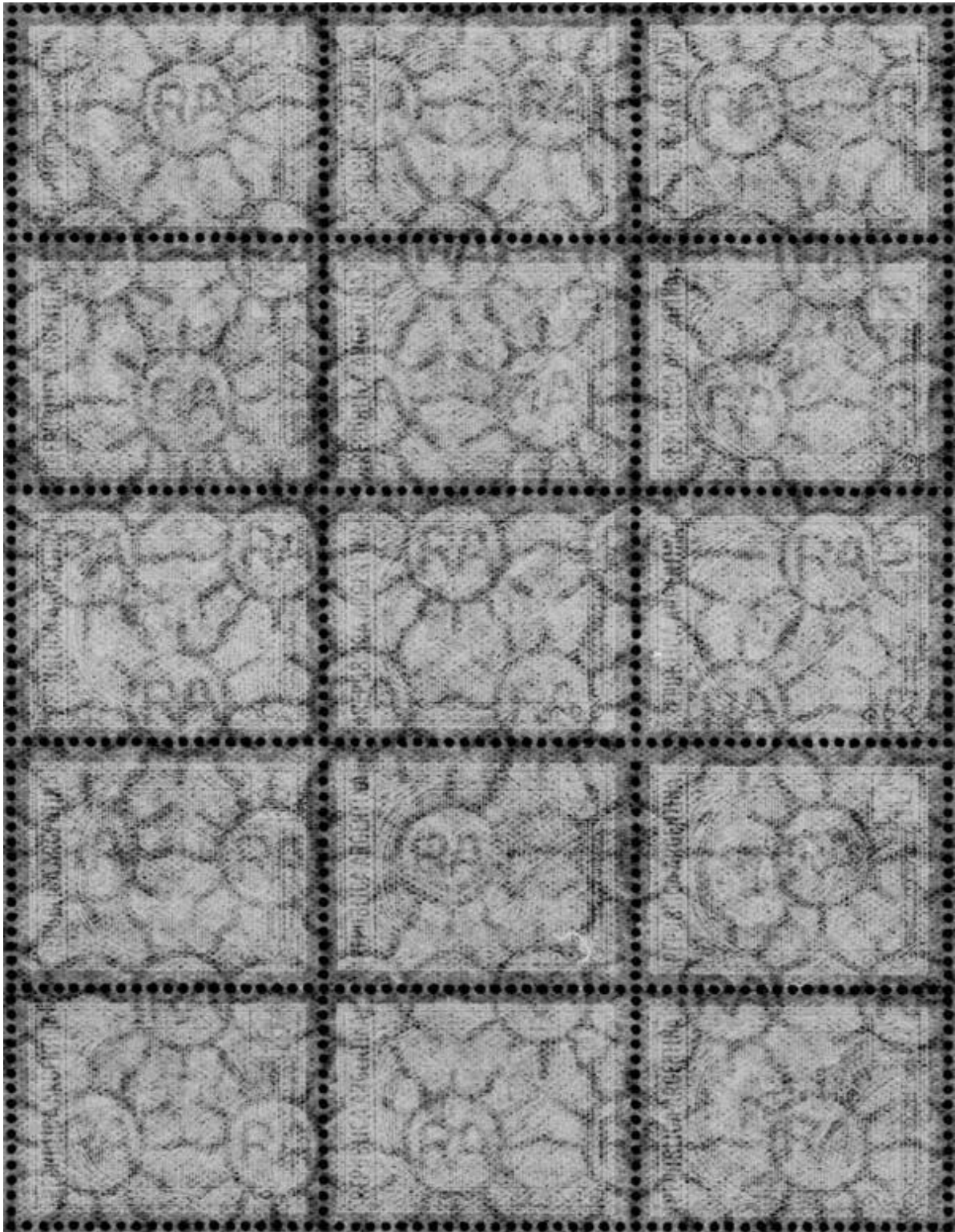


The best way to be able to easily discern the papers is to have many specimens to use as references. Here are a few for your use. Both of these are 1E1.



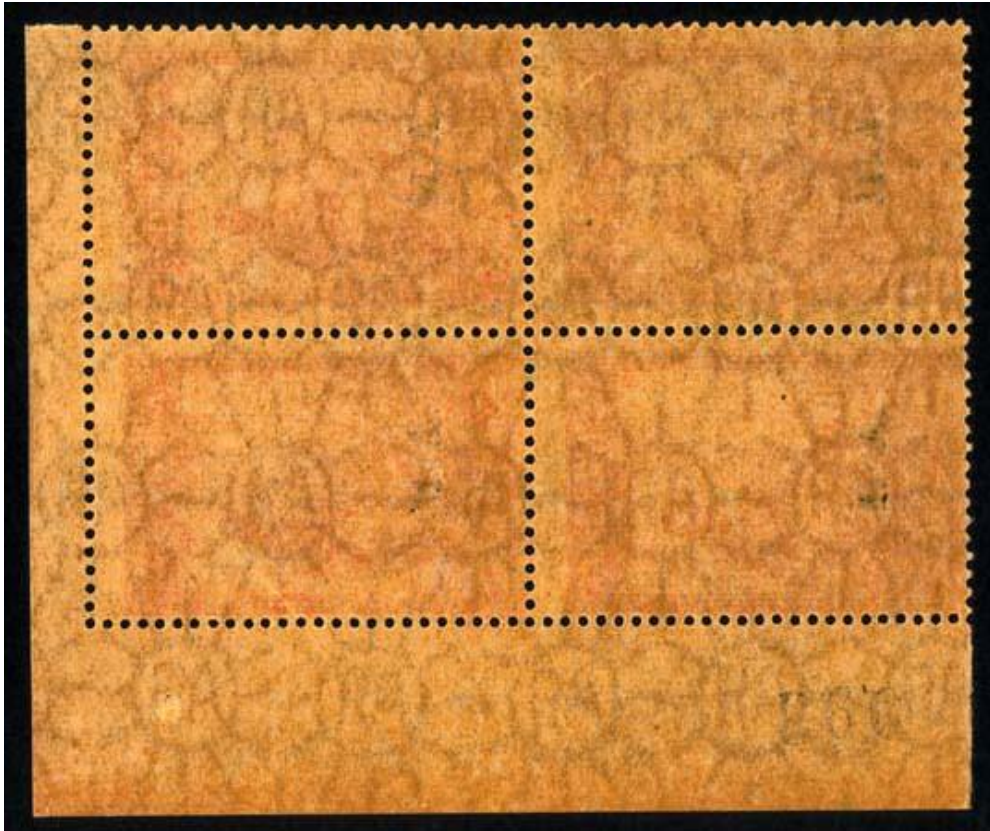
Here are examples of the 1E1 paper on which I have drawn an X to show the alignment of the background grid.

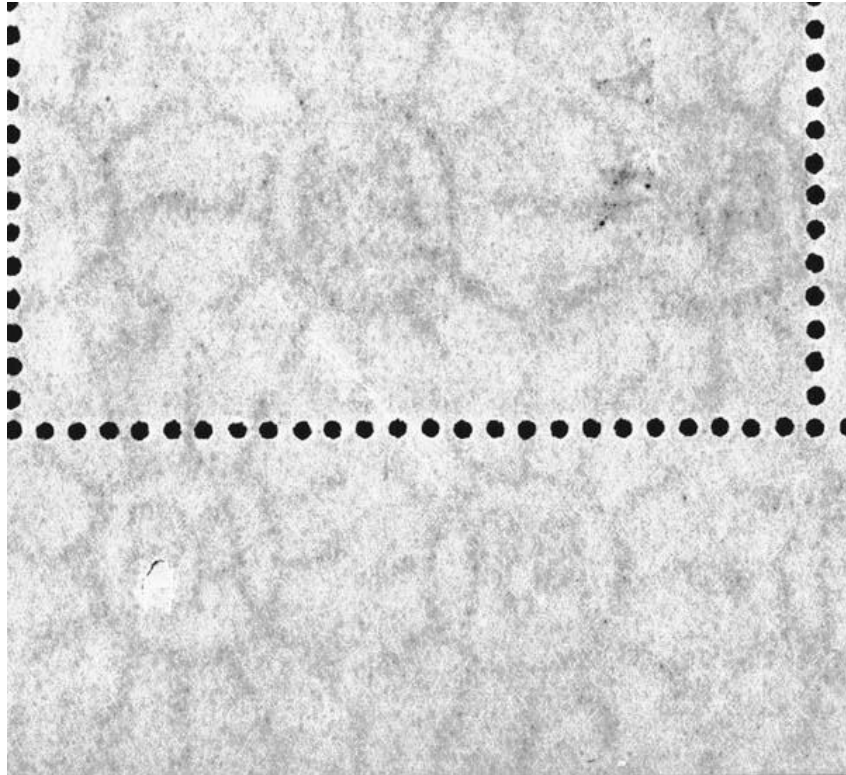




This 1E1 paper example shows minor differences in dimension for all features.

Here is a block of four of the 25c M.A. DEPOF, as always, on 1E2 paper.



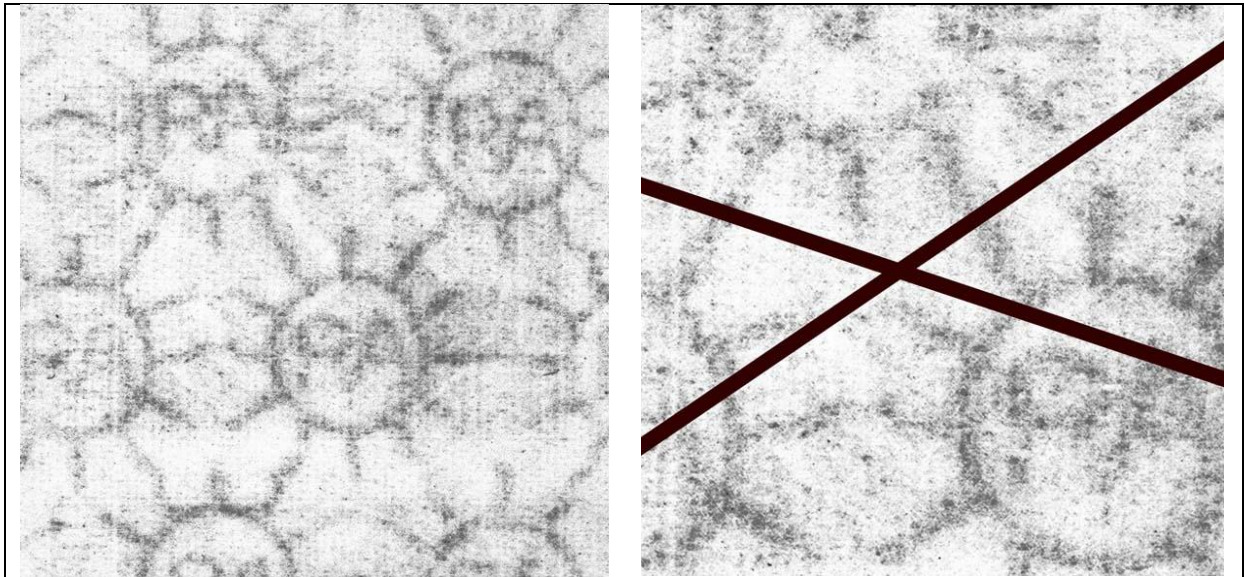
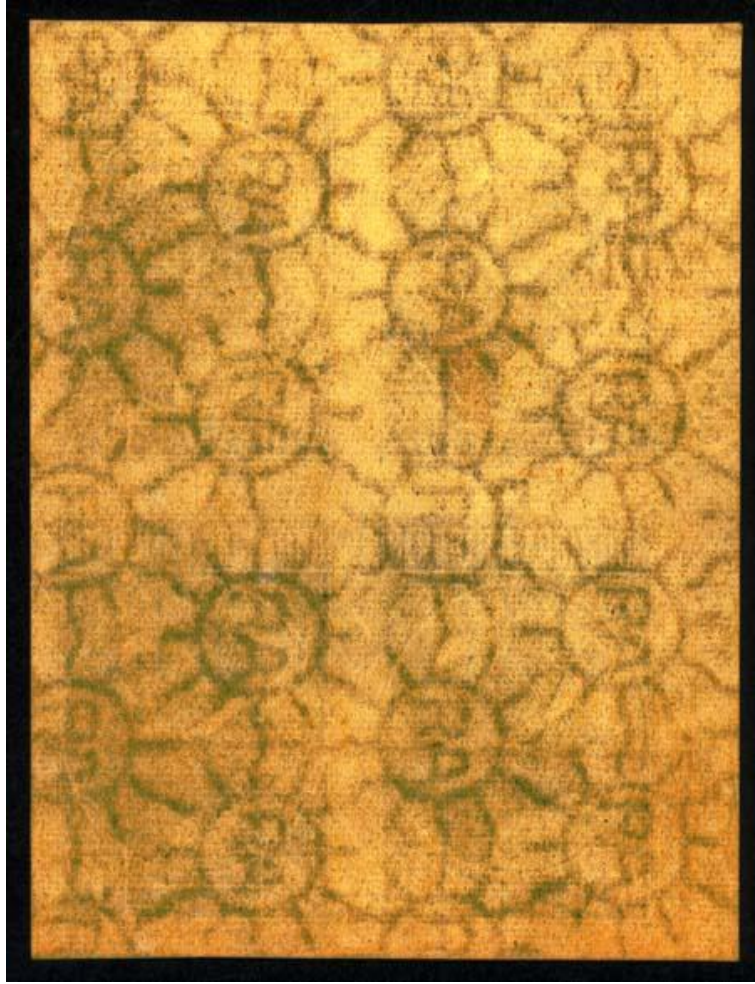


Here are two additional 1E2 specimens.





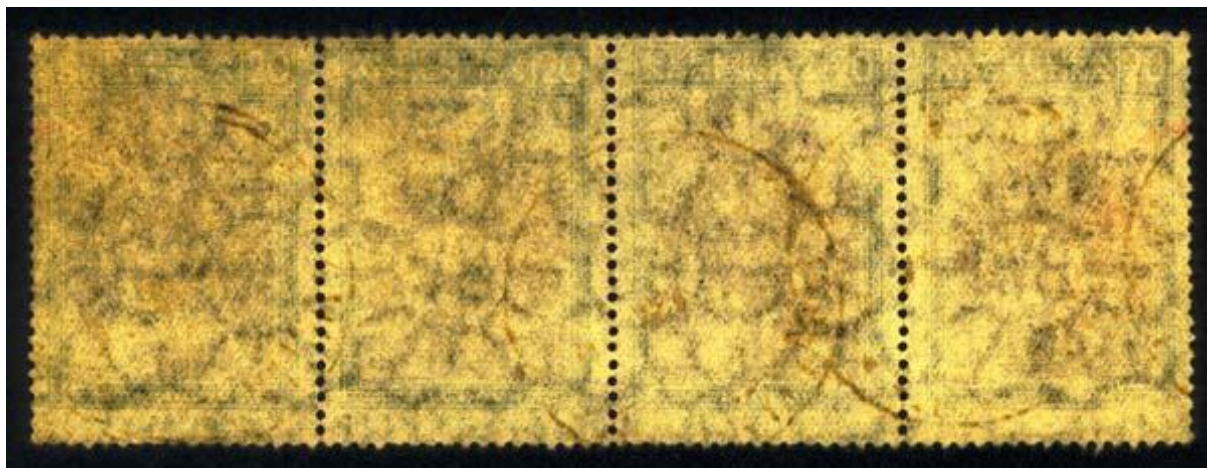
The third paper, the 1E3, has a watermark grid that is identical to that used for the 1E1 paper. The paper has a different background grid, and different pulp characteristics. Whereas the 1E1 is yellowish and thick, the 1E3 is white and medium-thick. I find the 1E3 used between 1939 and 1944. There is a dark color printing in 1939 of the 30c that I use to type the 1E3. There is also a dark color printing in 1943 of the 25c on this paper.



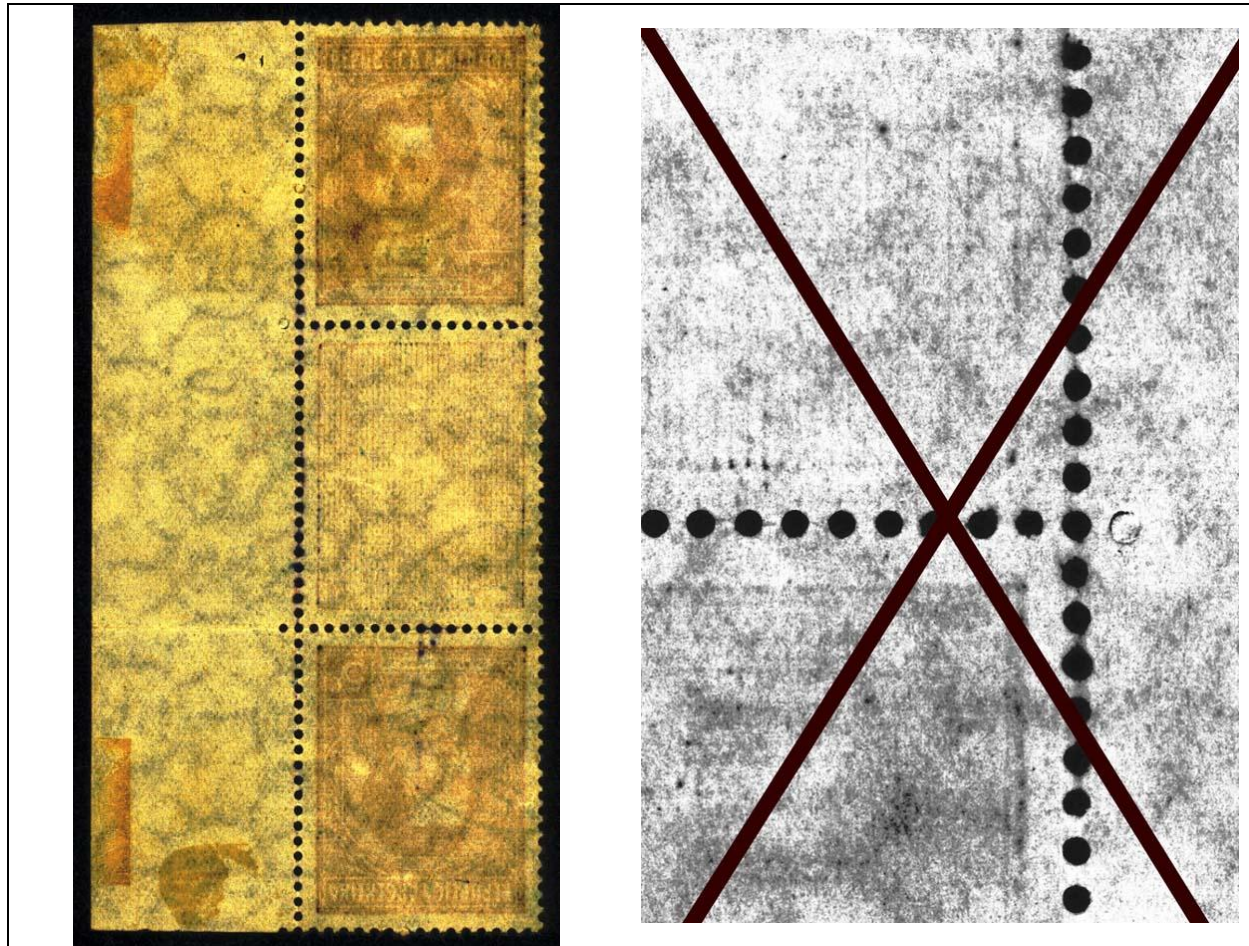
The 1E4 paper was issued in a small run in 1940. The most distinctive specimen is the 50c1E4, which has a distinctive burgundy red frame color.



Fortunately, the 20p1E4 is one of the largest printings of this rare value. Here is a horizontal strip of four of the 20p1E4.



The 5c1Et, the typographed value, is found on the 1E4 paper.



Here are examples showing the 1E3, 1E4, and the very rare 1E5 side-by-side.

5ct1E4 'MUESTRA'

According to Deluca these stamps were samples sent to postmasters.









On one of these stamps the E of MUESTRA is broken.



1E1 low value 'MUESTRA'

According to Deluca these stamps were samples sent to postmasters. If types were sent and not every variation, it is likely that the type II 10c Rivadavia red is not found with this overprint.







MUESTRA



1E1 high value 'MUESTRA'

Although the low values are just as rare, the high values comand higher prices in eBay.





The 20p1E1 'MUESTRA' is probably less rare mint than the base stamp even if according to Deluca 2000 complete series were sent to postmasters in late 1935 and early 1936.





The 1ct1E1

This stamp is surprisingly rare. It was used mostly in mid to late 1937.



A dated specimen showing early use.

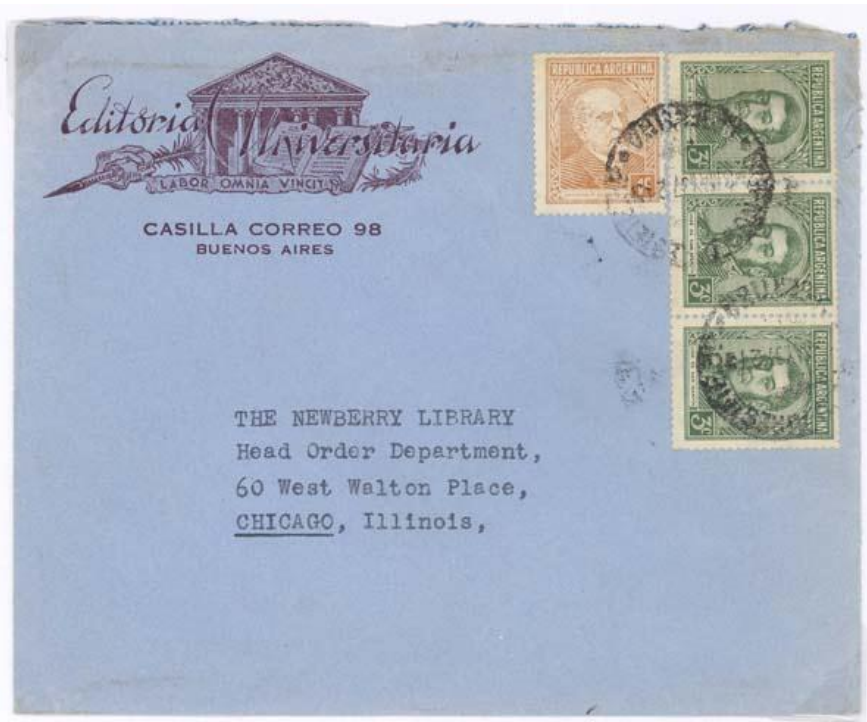


Here are two back scans showing the watermark (1E1).





This is the earliest cover I have. It is postmarked May of 1937.



mystery solved: the 10ctBRCL1A

The small batch of the 10c Rivadavia Browns issued during late 1939 and early 1940 are 1E4s by watermark, but the paper is clearly the CL1A. A comparison with a large selection of the 5c stamp on the same paper from the same era is all that is needed.

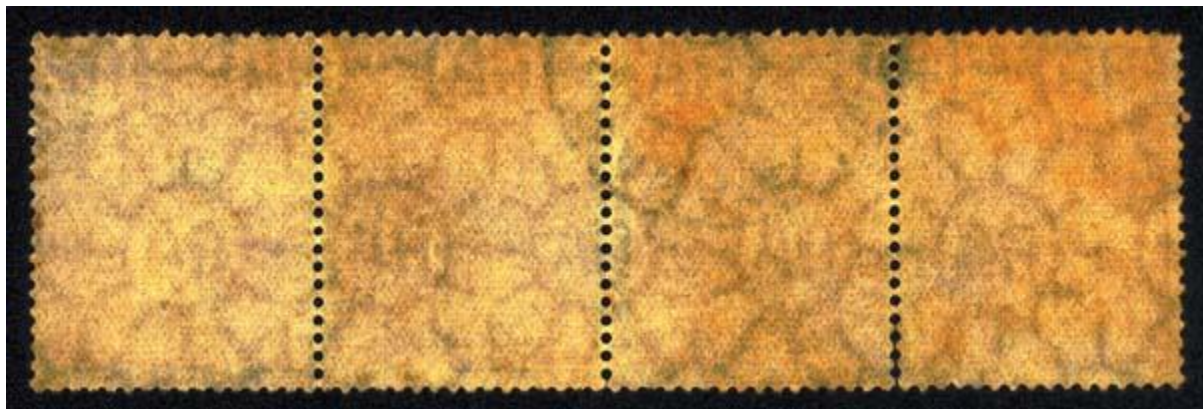


I have previously shown this stamp on a June 1939 cover.

A second look at the 5ct and 10cBRt printed in 1939

I have not correctly typed the paper on which these stamps are printed. It has the same watermark as the 1E4, but was used in 1939. The stamps are typographed. This paper is very thin and has a slight coating on the printed side. It could be classified as a clay paper, and I am leaving it as the CL1A; it is a 1E4 type paper, but it is not 1E4.

I show the 5c. It is a much more common stamp than the 10c Brown.



Here is a 10cBRt1E4 used in 1939.





Here is a vertical pair.



The watermark is best seen on the back of this vertical strip of three.



This 10c Brown is rare used, and even scarcer on cover. However, the claims of extreme rarity that are sometimes made I think are the result of a miss-classification. This stamp definitely fell through the cracks of all classifications to date. The references to date mention an early printing of the 10c Brown from 1939 but in offset, and we now know that this stamp is typographed.

Early use of the 10cBRCL1A on cover

This cover bears a 10cBRCL1A. Although this stamp is not extremely rare (as is the case for the elusive 2pCL1B of 1943) it is rare enough used when compared to the other printings of the 10cBR, most being extremely common, and is extremely rare on cover in 1939. This cover was mailed to Germany.



Here is the 10cBRCL1A



...and here is a detail of the date, March 22, 1939. According to Merlo, there is a first day cover in Moscatelli's collection dated Mar 16, 1939.



'Fonopostal' used as regular stamp.

These stamps were intended for mailing records. They were printed in a very small run and are sometimes found used as regular postage. Here is a cover with the 1.18 pesos value from 1940 to Geneva, Switzerland.





The 20cLC1E4

Rein has recently discovered this stamp. At first I did not believe it, but here it is. It was 'under my nose' all along. The top row are 2D and the bottom row are 1E4.



2D stamps in more detail





1E4 stamps in more detail

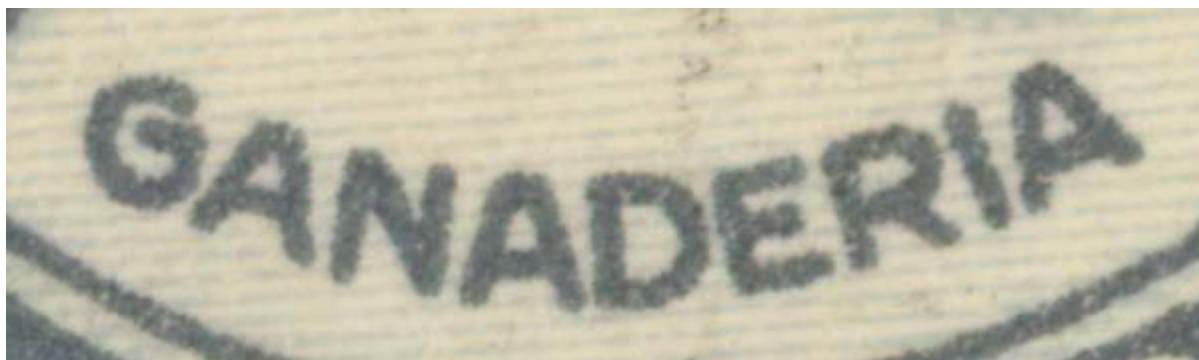




20cLC plates printed in wrong order

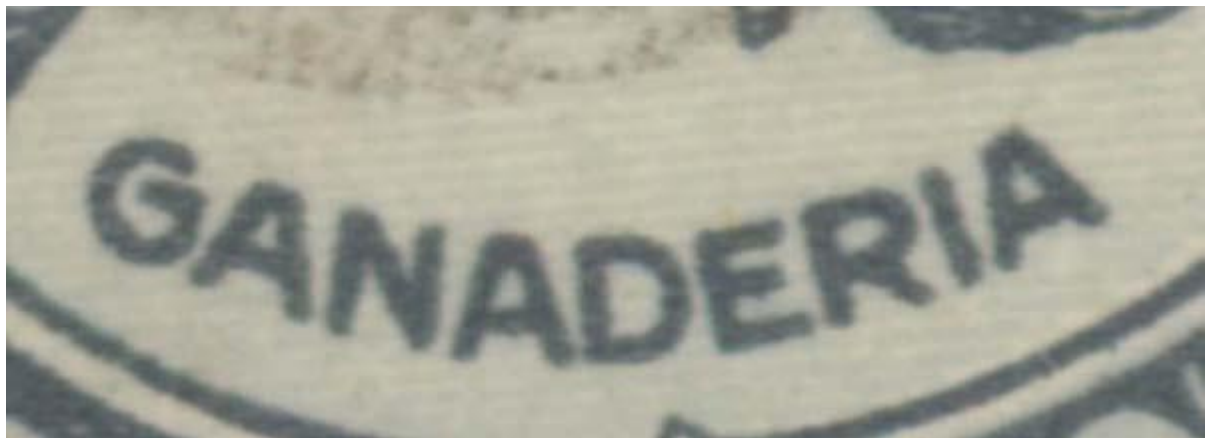
The first specimen, 1E3, has normal order and is shown here for reference.





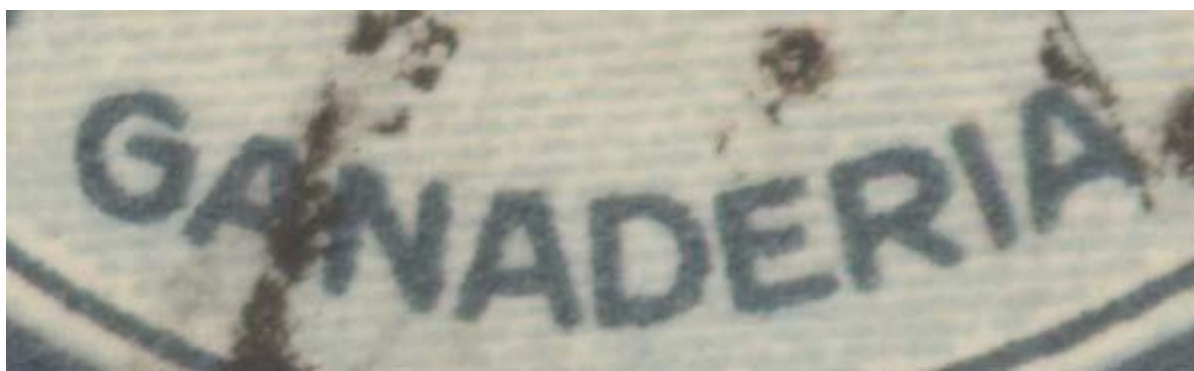
The two specimens below have the background plate printed over the foreground plate. Both are NGR.





If you look carefully at the D and the E of GANADERIA the background lines are clearly visible.





20cLC2C plate variety for left numeral

This plate variety consists of a small in line within the inner lines of the 2 of 20 in the lower left numeral box. I have yet to determine if this is a variety that is found more than once on the plate. Here are three specimens. All are 2C.













20cLC2C plate variety 'break on bull's nose'

This plate variety consists of a small line break along the edge of the bull's nose. It is uncommon in general, and since both stamps I find are NGR, it may be a late error.









20cLC additional plate varieties

This is a 20cLC1E3. I may have shown this plate variety before or have at least seen it before. The last A of GANADERIA is slightly elongated.





This is a 20cLCNGR. This stamp has a few dots and ink blots.





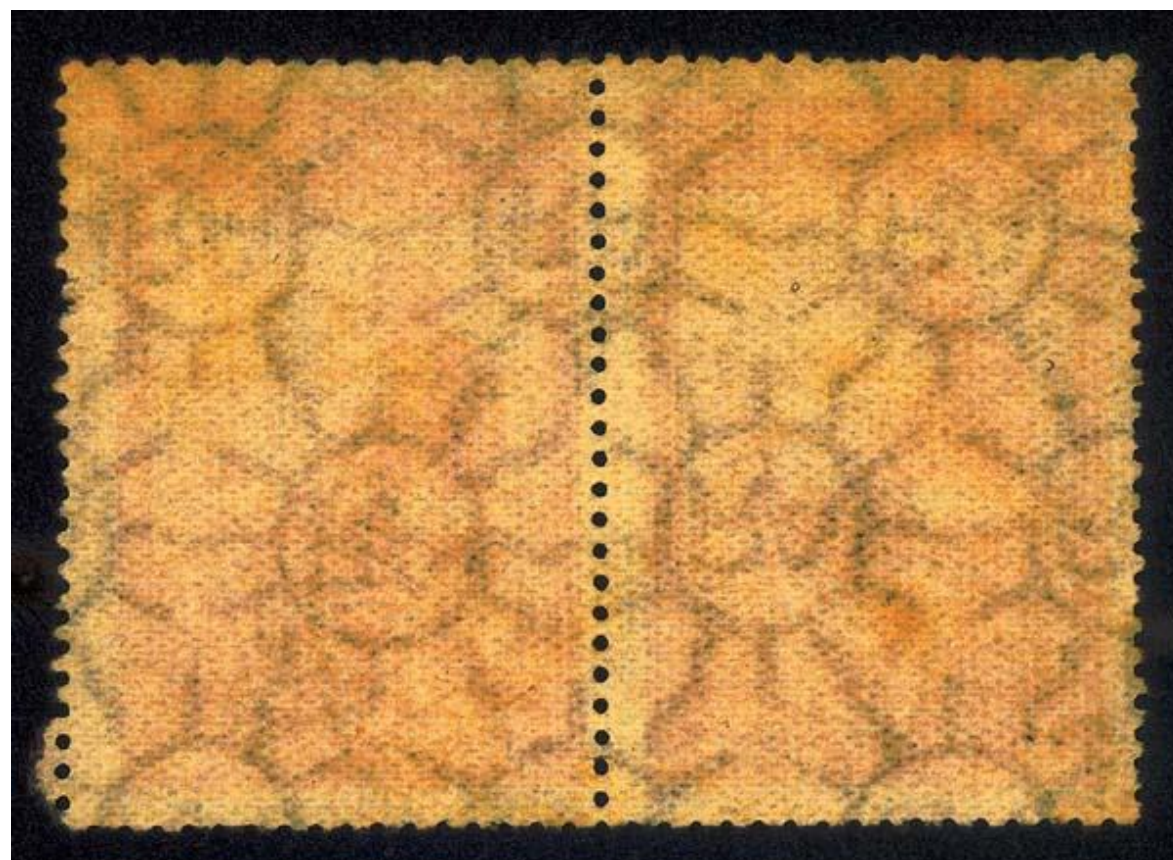
This is a 20cLC1L1. This stamp shows plate assembly lines along the left edge.





The Unusual 25c1E1t

The vast majority of the 25c1E1 were printed with the watermark perpendicular to the image of the stamp. This constraint is caused by the use of a paper roll in which only one direction (left or right depending on the relative position of the plate to the roll of paper) is possible. The only way to create the 25c1E1t is to print in pre-cut sheets from the roll that have been rotated 90 degrees. Apparently, this is what happened.



Some 25c vertical watermarks

I have finally been able to answer the riddle of the so-called 1E5 watermark I thought I had found on the 25c: it is the 1L6 also found for the 2 pesos! Here is a comparison of this watermark with the 1E2 and 1E4 watermarks. I also show the 1E2 transverse, a rare stamp. Because of how the watermark cylinders were constructed, the 1E2 transverse, or 1E2t, is really a separate watermark.



1E2



1E2t (rare)



1E4



1L6



30c used in 1936 with railroad postmark

The postmark is from the railroad station Perico and dates from 1936.



Was the 40c really issued January 1, 1936?

This cover dates from March 31, 1937. It is the earliest cover I have for this stamp. I find it printed on the first paper (the 1E1). I do not have any used specimens dated earlier than this cover. The stamp came into use mostly for the 1.45 pesos rate from the late 1930s.



40cNGR plate variety on two 1948 covers

I find a repetitive plate varieties on two covers from 1948. The first cover has a pair of the 40cNGR.



The plate variety, a gap between the A of REPUBLICA and the first A of Argentina, is found on the left stamp.





I find the same variety on the following cover.





40c2C plate variety

I do not find this plate variety on any other paper. It is found on the lower stamp of the following pair.





...on the left stamp of this pair



...on the right stamp of this pair



and this single



A 50c1E2t candidate

If this is indeed a transverse 1E2, it will match the handful of 25c1E2t's I recently came across. This is a difficult-to-explain stamp. Help Rein!





Examples from an exchange

I exchanged three 50c departmentals for these stamps with Jan from Denmark (thanks Jan!). This sample includes some nice specimens.



Here are some of the high values. This selection includes a 5pNGR and a 5pNOP, both in great condition.



The key stamp in this batch is this 5pNOP.



Here is a back scan of the 5p1L2.



25c, 30c, and 40c from exchange

More scans from the exchange with Jan. Here are the 25c stamps. The one I am labeling 1E4 could be 1L2....



2C



1E2



1E3b



2C



1E4



NOP

Back scans for the six stamps. I may be confusing the 1E3b with the 1L1.



Here is a back scan of what I am calling a 1E3b.



I am saying this stamp is 1E4 for now, but the 1E4 is always horizontal and this one is vertical.



This sample includes nice 30cNGR (common) and 40cNGR (rare, especially used).



It also includes a nice selection of 30c2C's (four vertical and one horizontal) and 40c2Cs (one of each vertical and horizontal).



The small spot in the background of one of the 30c2C's could be a plate variety.



50c from exchange

More scans from the exchange with Jan. Here are the 50c stamps. This is an excellent selection. There are two 1L3s, one regular and one 'Servicio Oficial.'



Here are the back scans.





There are two clays, 50cCL2Bs, of 1952. Take a look at how the postmark ink does not go through the coating of the paper, and instead gets smudged.



Here is a 50c1E4 with light colors instead of the usual burgundy color unique to the 1E4.





Here are four horizontal 50c2Cs.

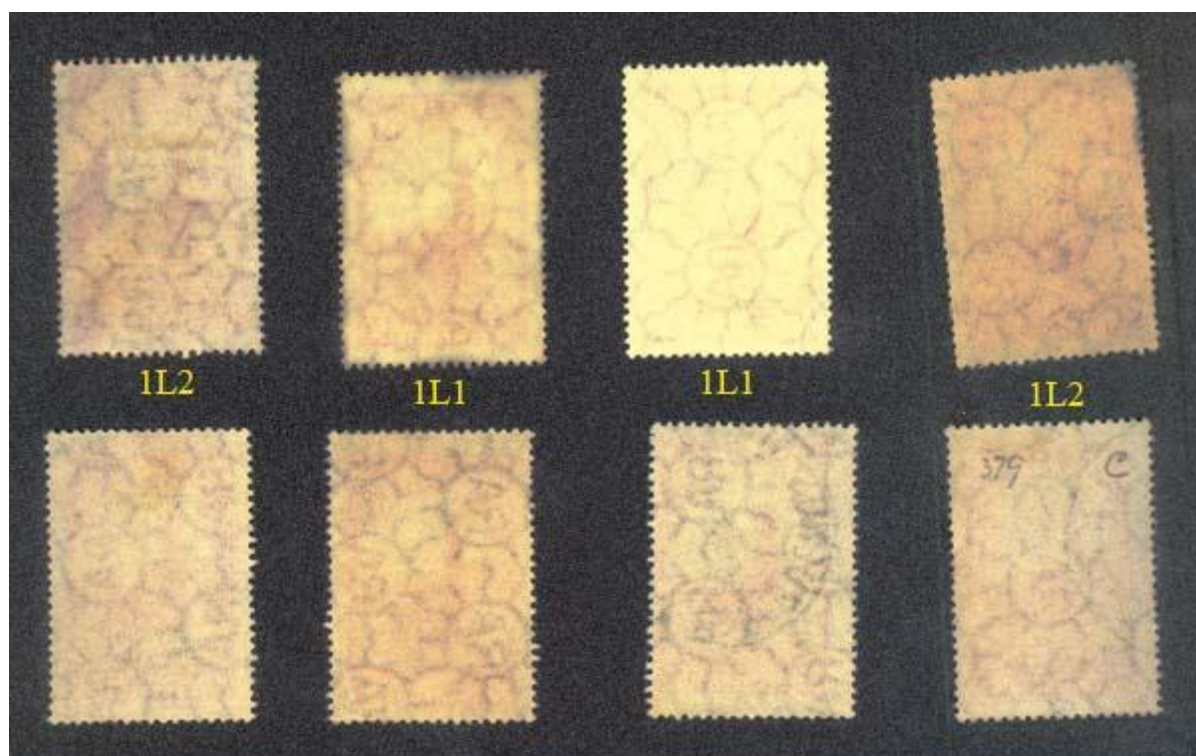


This selection includes these six 50c1L1s.

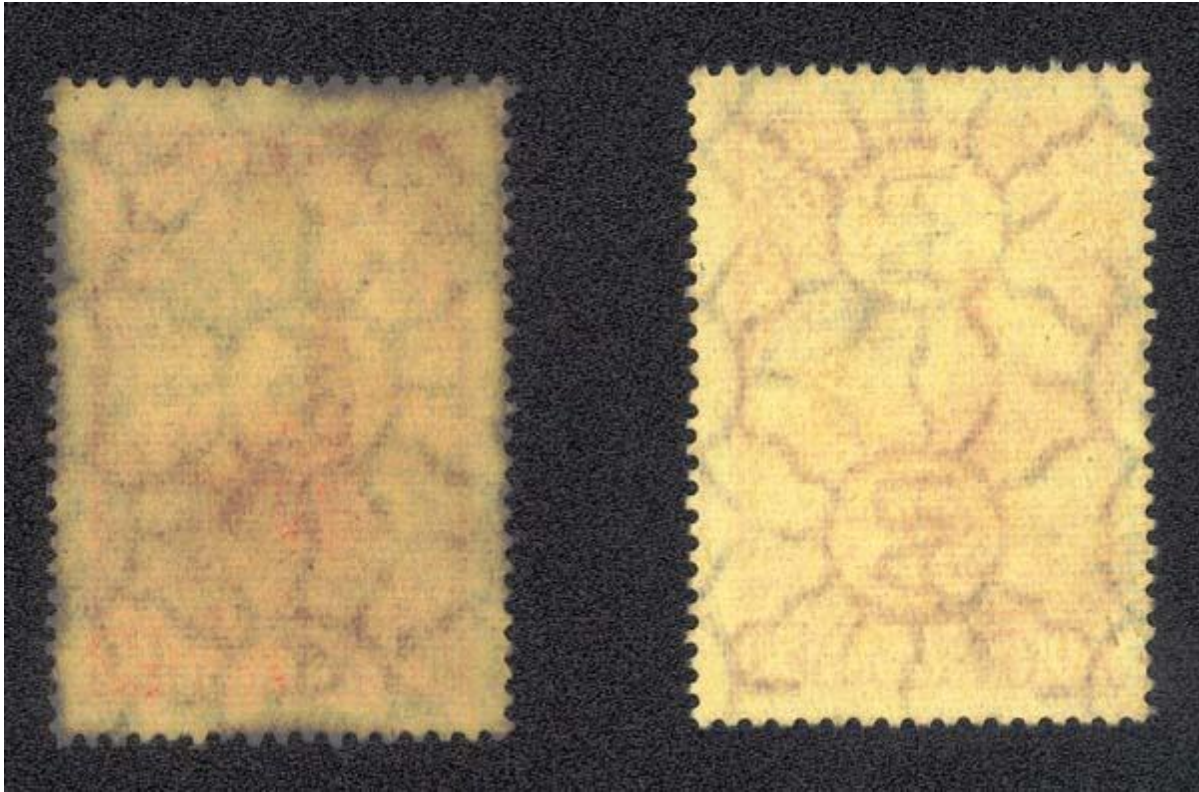




And here are six 50c1L2s and two 50c1L1s. The bottom row stamps are 1L2.



These are the two 1L1s in a larger format.



2p from exchange

More scans from the exchange with Jan. Here are the 2p stamps.



1L5z



NGR



2C-h



1L6



1E3a



1L5z



NGR



2C-h



1L6

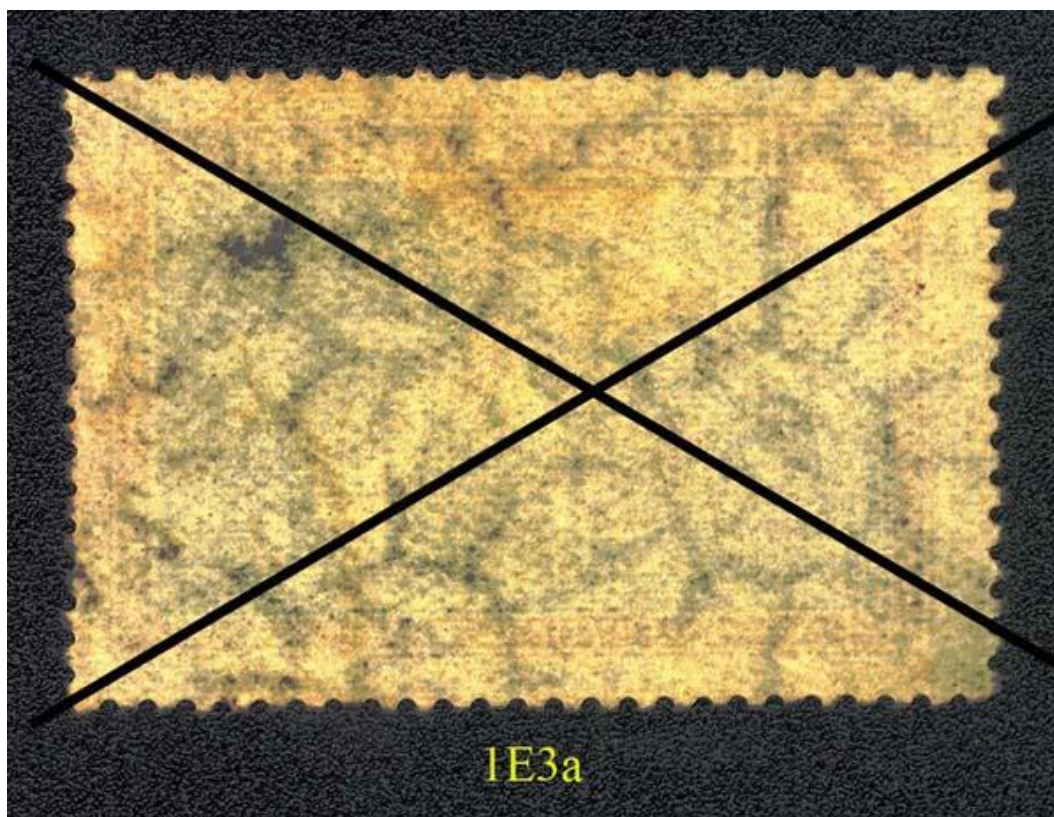


1E3a

The 2pNGR is the 'dot in I of REPUBLICA' plate variety.



Here is a 2p1E3a.



1E3a

1p1E on 1942 plates printed in wrong order

This example shows the background plate printed on top of the foreground plate. It is posted in 1942, and is one of the 1E papers.



Here is the stamp.



These two high resolution details show the inverse order of printing clearly.





A 1pL/2p1E1 cover

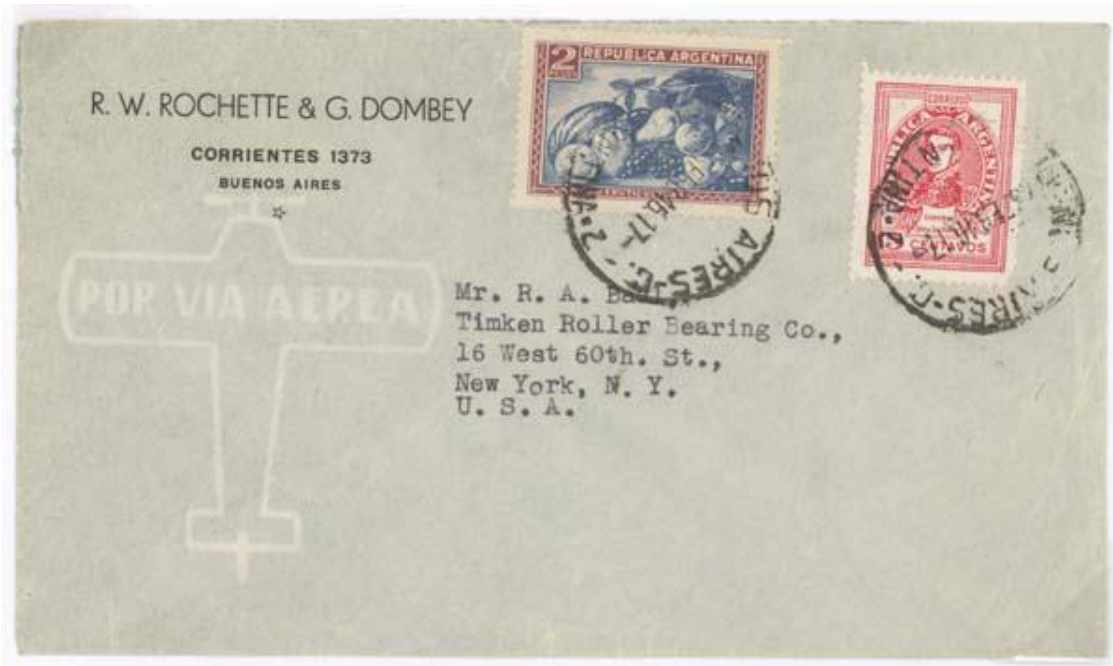
These cover combinations are a sure source of the rare 2p1E1.



2pNGR 'dot in I of REPUBLICA' plate variety

This plate variety may be to the master dies used to complete the plate on account of me finding several variants of it.

On cover I find a variety with a blue corner Upper Left.



Here is the stamp...



...and details of the plate flaws.



I also find this stamp, and with a different set of flaws in addition to the one that sets it apart as

this variety.





The variety is also found on the 2pNGR 'Servicio Oficial.' These two specimens have additional flaws that are different.





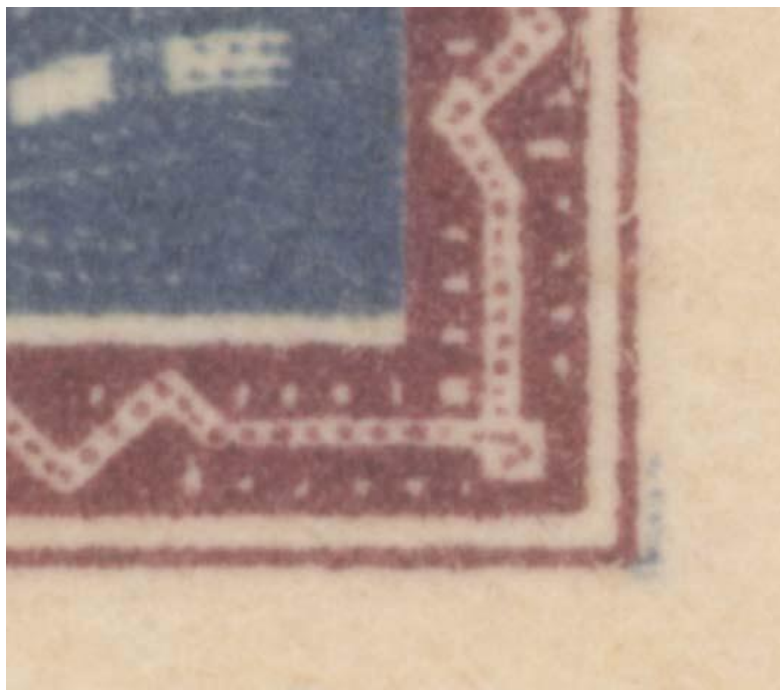




2pNGR plate varieties with one or two visible blue corner

All in my current sample are 'Servicio Oficial' stamps.

All in my current sample are 'Servicio Oficial' stamps. The first stamp has the blue outer mark Lower Right.



The second stamp has the blue outer corner Upper Right.





It is possible that we cannot see additional blue corners because of the overlap over the frame.

2pNGR plate varieties with two visible blue corners

The first three are regular issue stamps. These first two have Lower and Upper Left corners.

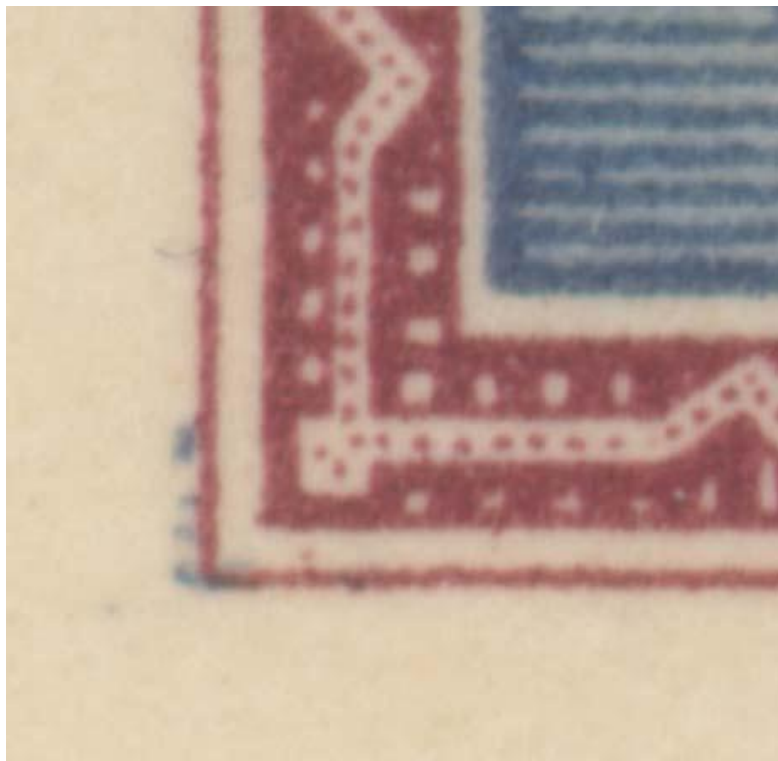








This specimen has Lower Left and Upper Right corners.





And here is a 'Servicio Oficial' stamp with Lower Left and Right corners.







2pNGR plate varieties with three visible blue corners

This cover bears a 2pNGR with three visible blue corners.



Here is a detail of the 2pNGR and the 30cNGR.

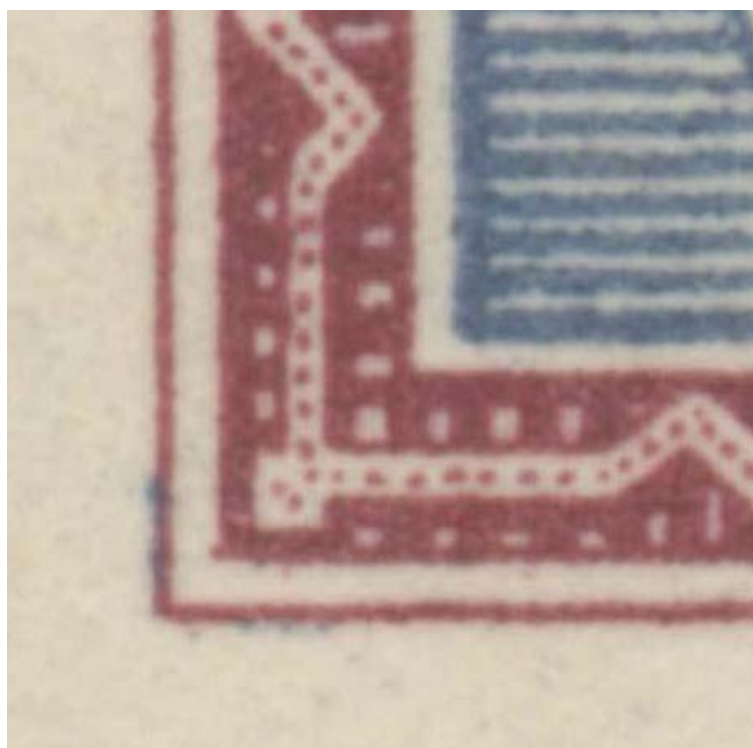


Here is a detail of the 2pNGR.



There are Lower and Upper Left corners similar to some of the stamps with two visible blue corners, and a third corner Upper Right.





The 30c on this cover also has some plate wear to the bottom letters and the value box.





2pNGR with lower line break

These two specimens are 'Servicio Oficial' issues. This plate variety is characterized by a lower line break to the center design (blue) above the L of AGRICULTURA.





2pNGR remarkable plate variety

This plate variety is composed of several scratches to the design. Here is a cover bearing a stamp with this plate variety.



I use this second specimen to show the flaws.



Break above the 2 of 2 pesos.



Line breaks above the B and last A of REPUBLICA and scratch across the AR of ARGENTINA.



Small protrusion out of the blue center, blue dot in outer frame, and red dot in inner frame.



A scratch over the F of FRUTICULTURA and two long scratches in the blue design above the I and the L of FRUTICULTURA



Small gap in the blue dots Upper Right.

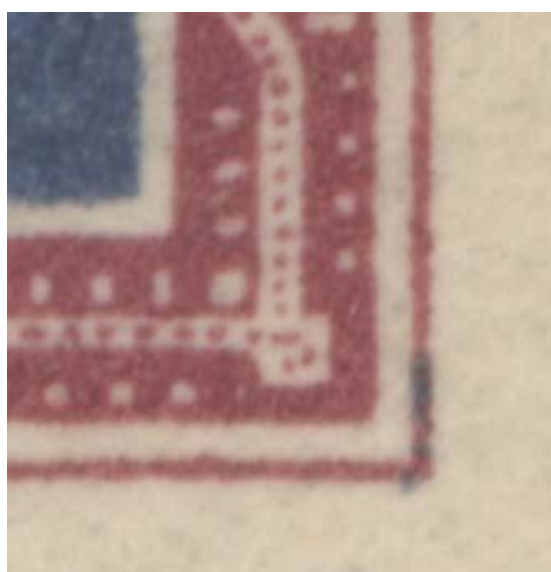


2pNGR with two blue smudges above the frame

The main feature of this plate variety is the two blue smudges above the frame. There are additional flaws that vary from stamp to stamp, which may mean that this variety is found on one of the master dies used to make the plate. I find this plate variety on cover.







A regular issue single.



Several 'Servicio Oficial' stamps.







PUBLICA A



2pNGR with inner break to frame towards Upper Left

These two stamps are 'Servicio Oficial' issues.





Additional 2pNGR plate varieties

Two regular issue stamps.







'Servicio Oficial' stamp.



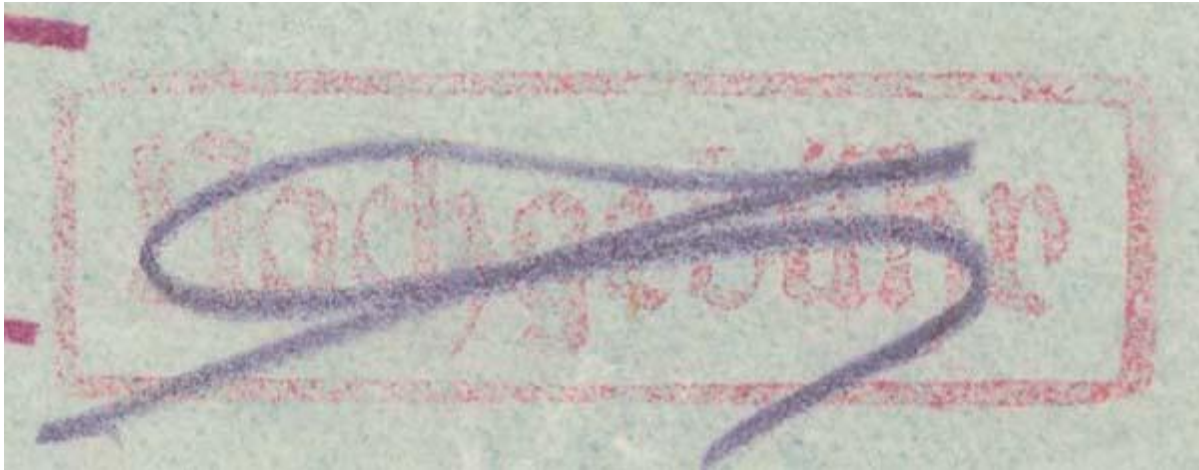


Interesting marking on cover to Germany

Here is a cover from 1936 to Germany.



The marking has been crossed out.



Here is a detail of the 2 pesos stamp.



Recent find: a 2 pesos clay from 1943

The 2pCL1B of 1943 is the scarcest stamp of the entire issue. I just came across this stamp. Several features of this stamp are give-aways: the stamp is postmarked 1944 (and 1943/44 are the correct years only), the paper is bright white, the watermark is perpendicular, and the ink shows some splatter.



Here is a comparison 1E1/3.



The watermark is barely visible, as it should be. The RA is perpendicular to the 1E1/1E3, as it should be.



Here is a detail showing how the ink tends to splatter on the clay coating.



These details show differences between the clay printing (top) and printing on the 1E1/1E3 papers (bottom).



Position 100 of the 5p2C

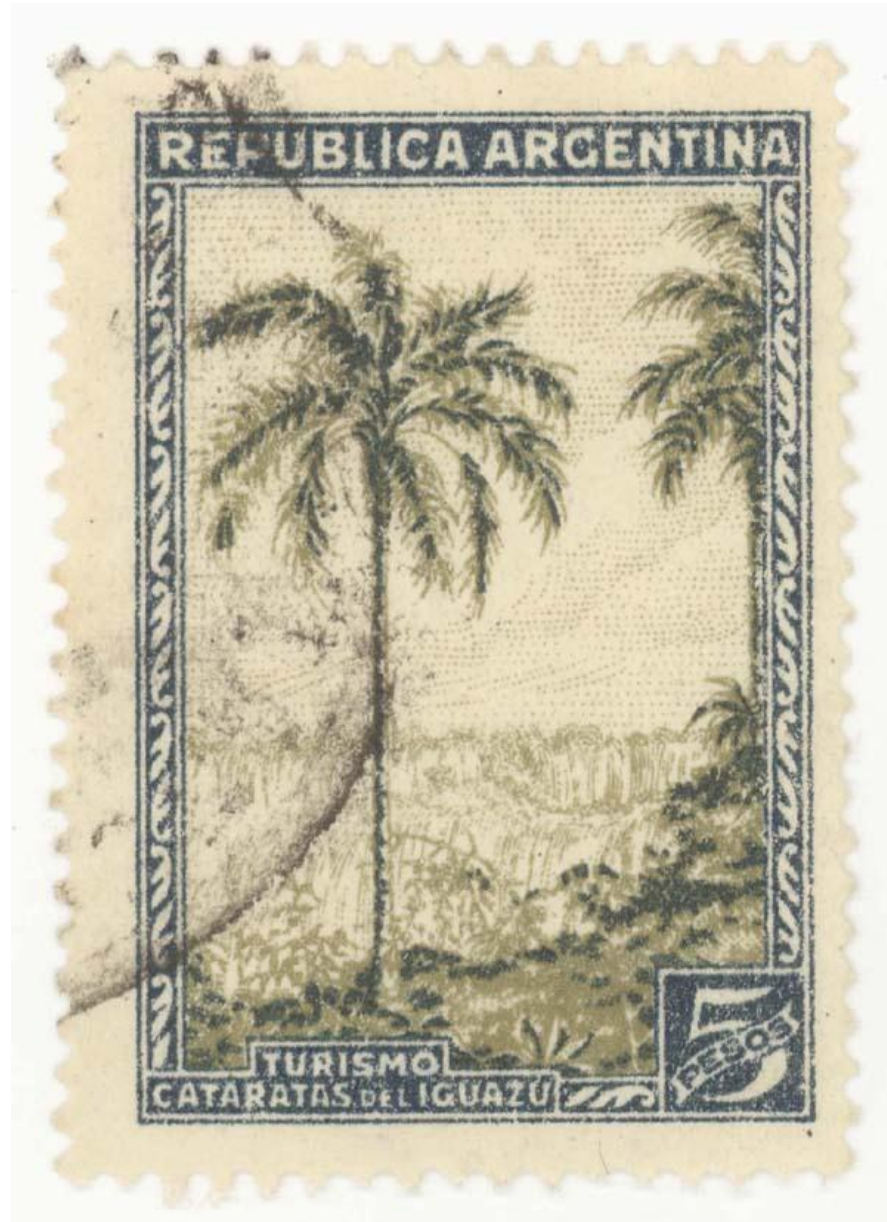
This is the lower rightmost position in the sheet. Like Boker said, these beautiful selvages are some of the most valuable blank pieces of paper in the world.



The 5p1L1

In one of the many remarkable flukes of this series, the printer managed to match exactly the colors of the early printings for this 1951 issue. Almost all other stamps in this series that were printed in 1951 and thereafter have colors that can easily be distinguished from previous printings.

Here are two specimens with their corresponding watermark scans. Notice that the plates are dirty and/or worn out.









Here is a 5p1L1 with dark colors.



A 5p1L1 and 5p1L2 match plate variety

Here is the 5p1L1 stamp.



This stamp has a lower line break to the frame below and between the EN of ARGENTINA.



Here are two 5p1L2 stamps that are likely the same plate variety. It is possible that the scratch over the palm either came out after a light acid wash or was introduced during handling of the plate.









A second 5p1L1 and 5p1L2 match plate variety

Here is the 5p1L1 stamp.



This stamp has a blue dot to the left of the R of REPUBLICA.



Here is a 5p1L2 stamp that is likely the same plate variety. It is possible that the scratch below ARGENTINA either came out after a light acid wash or was introduced during handling of the plate.





Another 5p1L1 and 5p1L2 match plate variety

The main characteristic of this plate variety is a break in the outer frame line under the second to last A of CATARATAS. I show here only two of the 5p1L1 specimens. By how commonly I find this plate variety, I am postulating that it is a master plate variety. In addition, other flaws vary from stamp to stamp.









Here is a 5p1L2 specimen with the same lower line break but with different additional flaws.





Notice that the break appears in the same place for one of the 5p1L1 stamps and a 5p1L2 stamp. The 5p1L2 is the remarkable 'long scratch in background' plate variety.



5p1L1 small UL scratch plate variety

These two stamps share the diagonal Upper Left corner scratch and outer scratches Lower Left corner. There are small variations in additional flaws between these two stamps.









Additional 5p1L1 plate varieties

These two stamps have Upper Left corner scratches.





This stamp also has outer scratches Lower Left corner.





5p1E on cover from the Jantzen correspondence

I have two of these covers, both with 5 pesos stamps. The other cover is posted in 1936. This one is posted in May of 1938.





Doubled background 5p1E4
 This stamp has a pronounced doubled background.

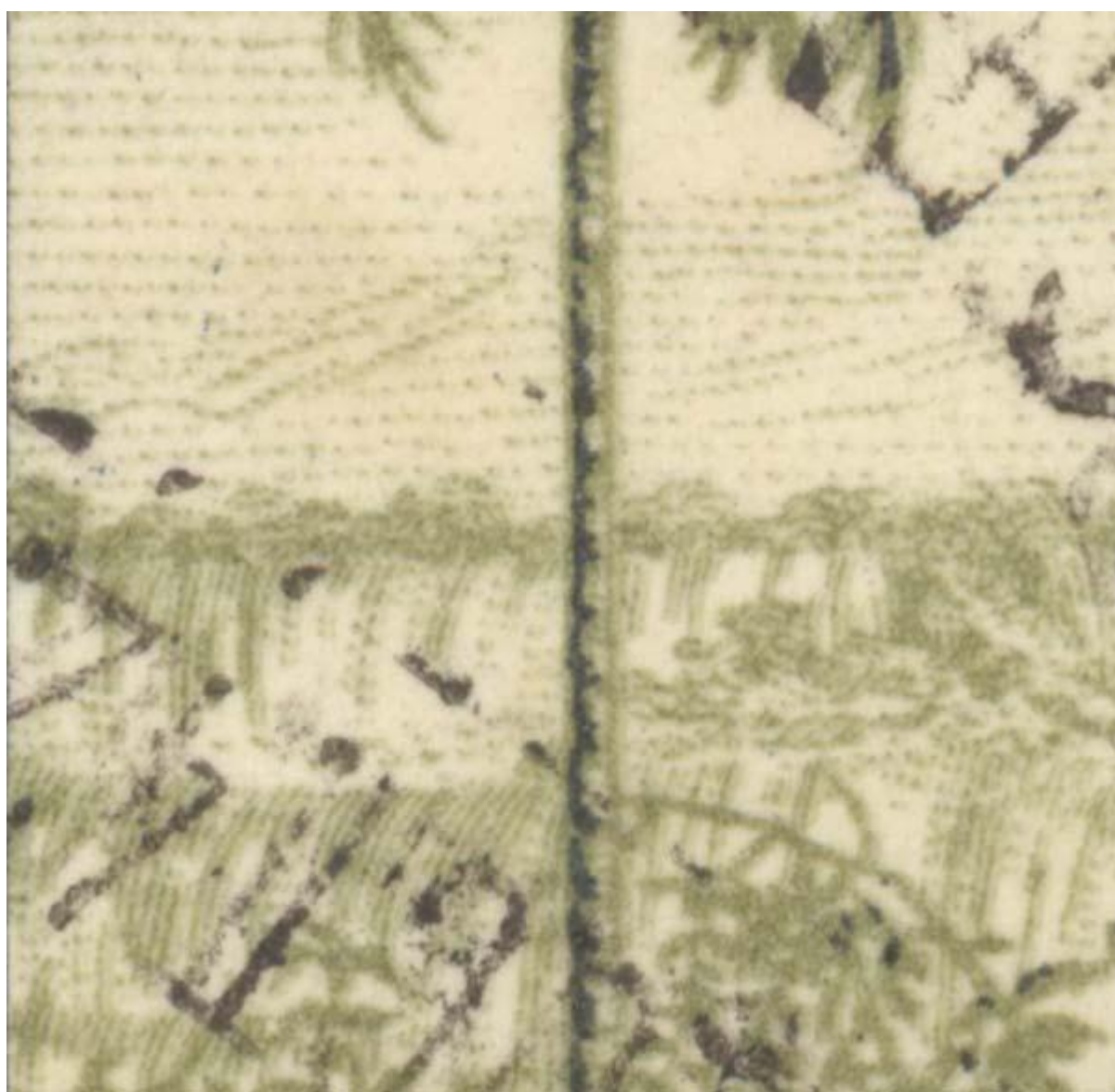


I compare this stamp to a 5p1E3c from the same era.



These details show the difference.



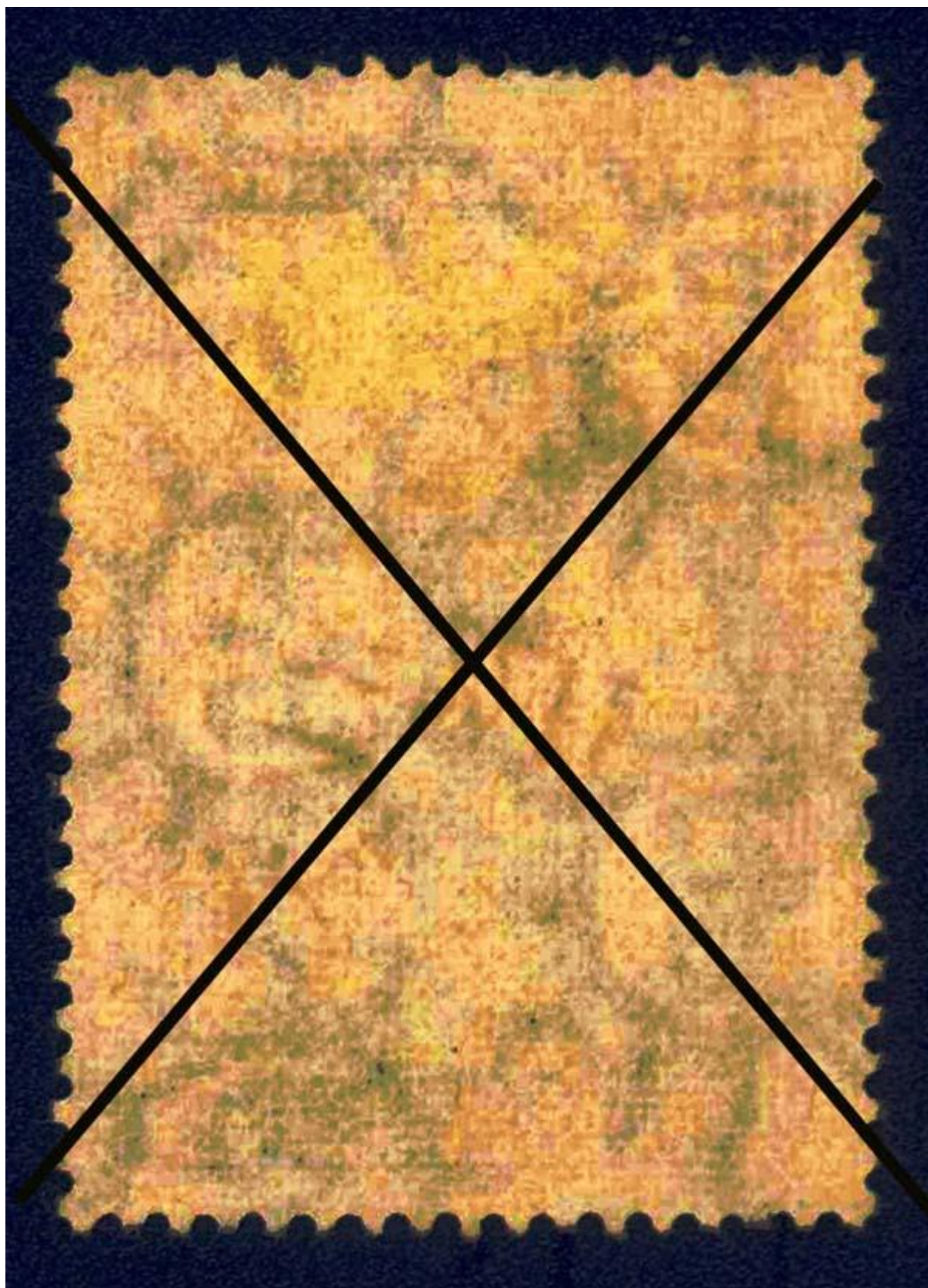


Three 5p1E3s

These are examples showing the differences between 1E3a and 1E3b.

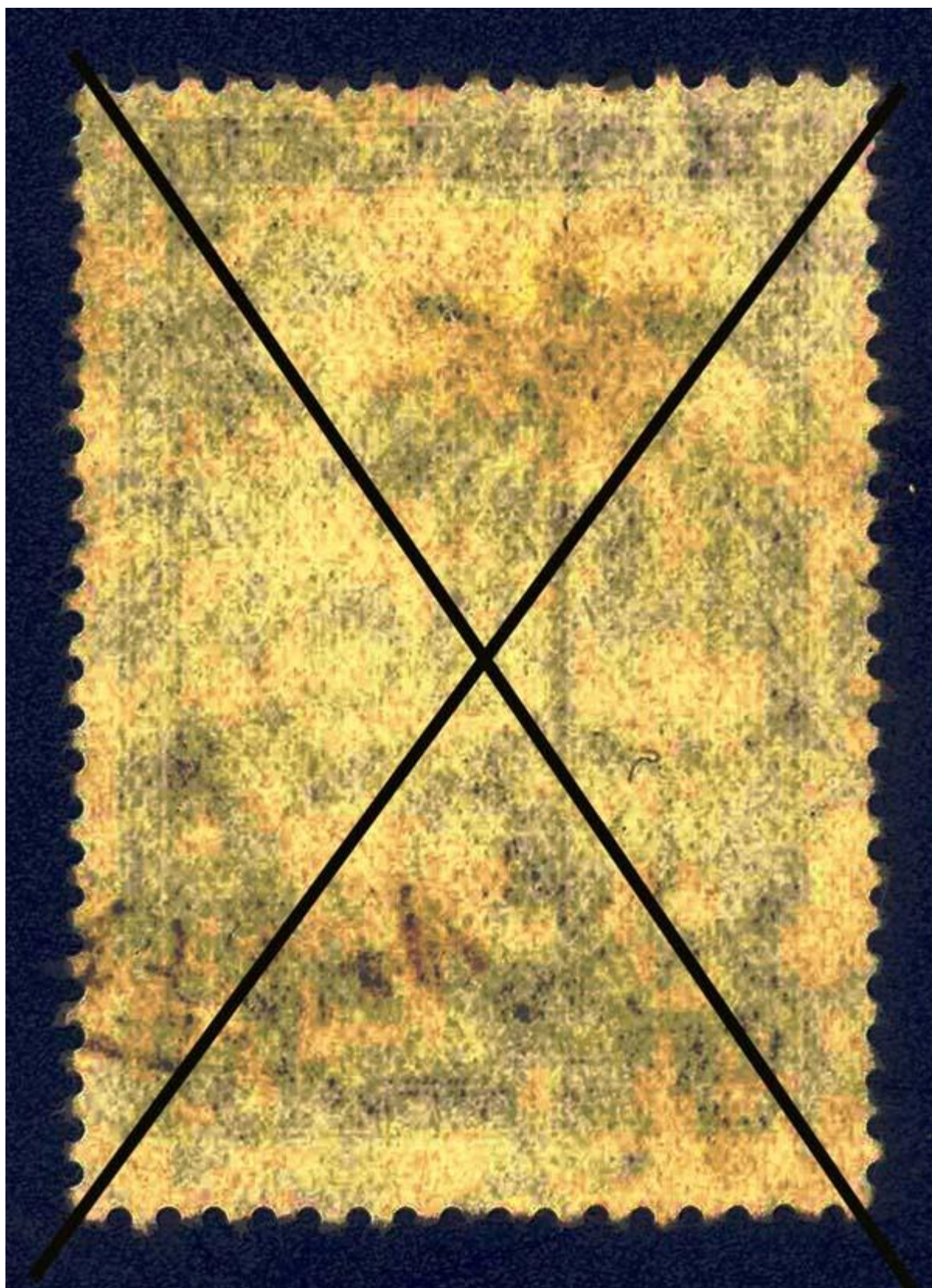
Here is a 1E3a. The angle between the threads is rectangular.





...and another 1E3a.





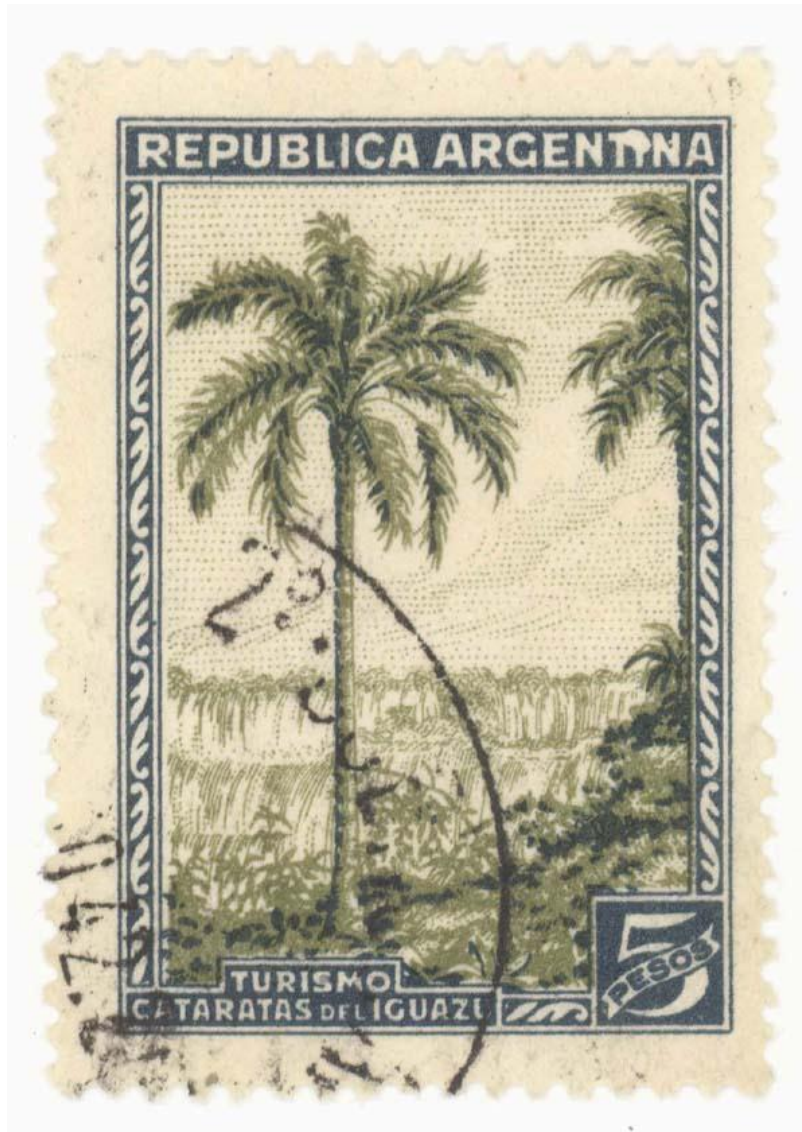
...and here is a 1E3b. The angle between the threads is square.





Two 5p1E4 Plate Varieties

The first one has missing ink to the TI of ARGENTINA.



The second one has a small scratch to the last A of ARGENTINA.



10p1E1 on 1936 piece

This cover piece is from a correspondence to Marseilles, France for which I have other items.



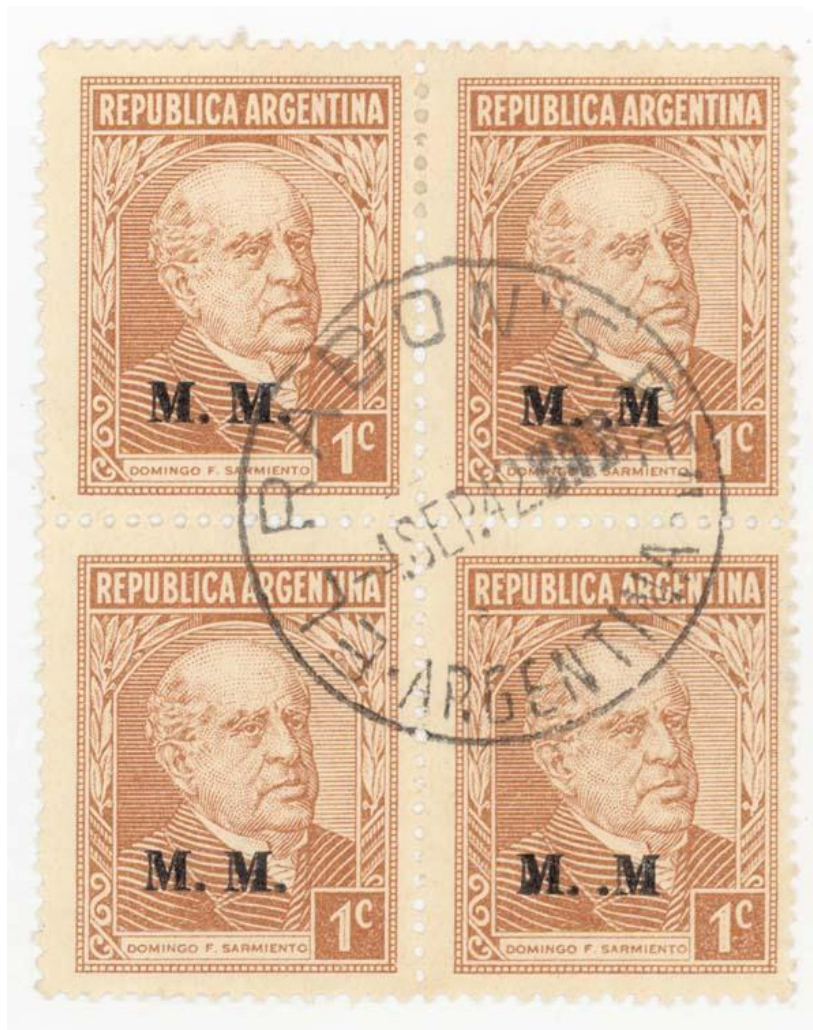
cents M..M completed

I was only missing the 3c, shown here along a few new ones that complement the ones I already have.

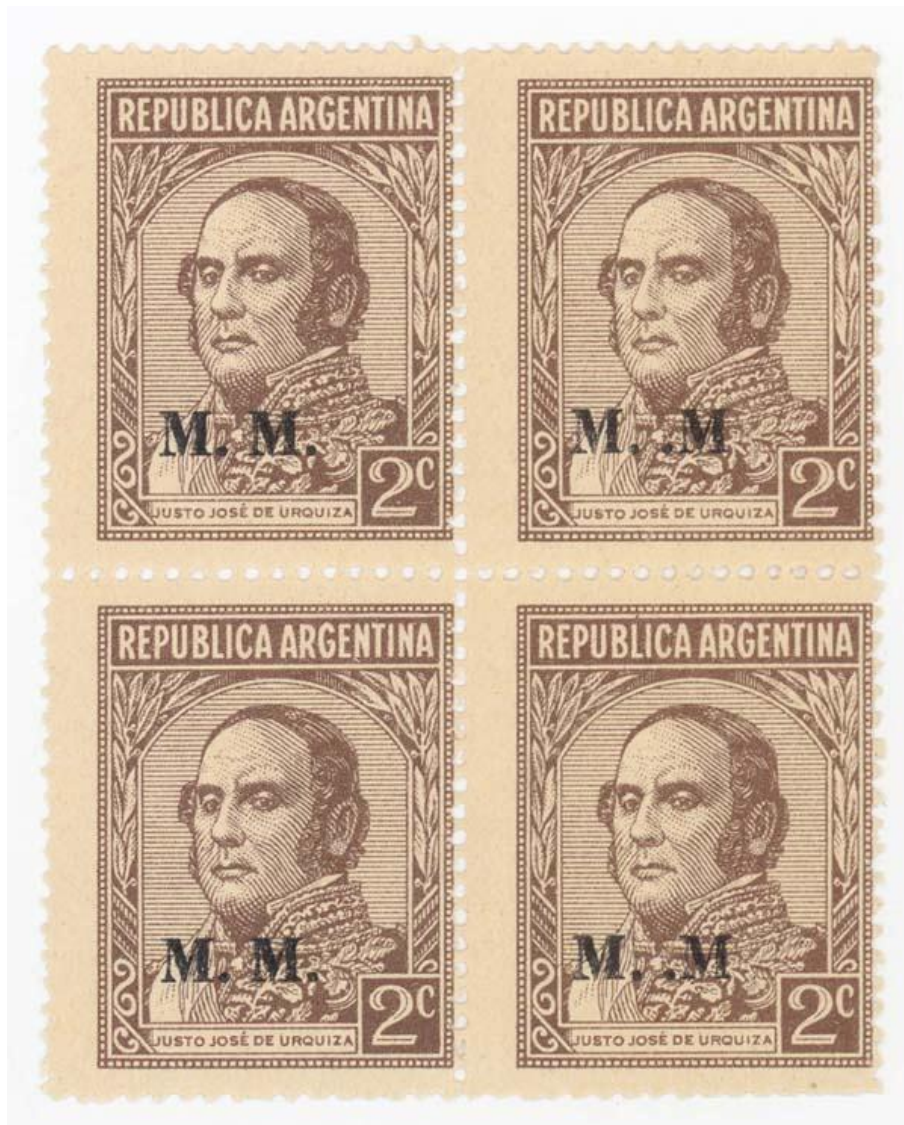
1c block mint (remaindered)



1c block used



2c block mint (remaindered)



3c block mint (remaindered, yet still a rare stamp)



5c pair used





The 10c-I-MG DEPOF and a handful of Type I MMs

I have finally acquired a copy of the extremely rare 10c MG Type I. This stamp is not in the best condition, but it is an acceptable copy of what seems to me is the rarest departmental, and perhaps one of the rarest of the entire series.



I also just received a few MMs





...an M..M single



...and an M..M in a pair



A few 10c Red Type I Departmentals

These are always good finds.





10cR-I-MM forgery

Here is a crude, yet interesting forgery. The original stamp (the 10cR MM Type I) is rare, but the MG is considerably scarcer. I guess the forger did not know relative rarity well.





Two official inverted overprint stamps

The first stamp is a 10c Rivadavia Red Type II with inverted M.G. overprint. The stamp is used, and appears genuine. Use departmental officials are considerably more desirable than mint ones. Because mint ones are most likely reminders-these stamps were not sold to collectors-the used ones are the desirable ones.



Here is a detail after a 180 degree rotation.



The second specimen is a 50cNGR-SO.



This stamp has ink from the sheet below it, which means that there are at least two sheets of 100 stamps with this variety, quite likely more. The stamp is mint and appears genuine.



Here is a detail of the overprint.



Here is a detail of the back-printed overprint after a horizontal flip. These two overprints need to match exactly since the sheets were stacked evenly on each other.



30c DEPOF Inventory

Here are the stamps I currently have:

30c1E1-MA 52
30c1E1-MG 23; 30c1E2-MG 4
30c1E1-MH 7; 30c1E2-MH 2
30c1E1-MI 12; 30c1E2-MI 34
30c1E1-MJI 35; 30c1E2-MJI 1
30c1E1-MM 18
30c1E1-MOP 15; 30c1E2-MOP 17
30c1E1-MRC 20

I do not find any 1E2 for MA, MM, and MRC. Jorge, in Argentina, who has a large number of these, does not find them either.

Here is the MJI 1E2





Newly received 25c and 50c DEPOFs

Here are blocks for MG





And I also just received used/mint of the 50cMG, a very rare stamp.





Added several 1pL-MI and 1pL-MOPs, now only missing the 1pL-MRC

A normal 1pL-MOP



1pL-MOP 'long scratch across Argentina'





1pL-MOP with deformed M in overprint



1pL-MOP with lower part of the overprint missing



1pL-MI 'long scratch across Argentina'





1pL-MI with retouched left '1'



The 1p1E2-MM and the 1pL-MRC

With these stamps I have attained type completion of the departmental officials, and perhaps even issue completion....I need to check the 1E2 30c stamps, I may be missing one.

Here are mint and used examples of the 1pL-MRC





Here is the 1p1E2-MM



Time to begin measuring rarity for the Departmentals

Which ones are the scarcest used/mint/on cover?

I only base rarity on what I have and that can lead to a poor assessment of rarity. In my case I rank rarity this way (1 is rarest):

1. 10c MG type I
2. 15c MH
3. 1p MM, all 1p with boundaries, all 50c, a few austrian 30c, 3c MM
4. the remaining 10c Type Is and the remaining 1p top and bottom overprint without boundaries
5. all remaining large format (25c, 30c)
6. 2c, 3c, 20c JMG and 20c MG
7. 10c type II
8. 5c offset and 1c
9. 5c typo

Mi bias is for used and on cover only are useful to measure rarity since the mint ones are remainders. I have a notable example: my almost complete sheet (89 of 100) of the 30c MH 1E2 is for a stamp for which I only have a handful used, yet I have dozens of the 30c MH 1E1 used. I will post here once I get some responses from the Argentinean forum.

The above ranking is slightly different to the table below because I have additional stamps in a stock that I have not counted, and because I am 'not there yet' in measuring relative rarity correctly. Here are the stamps I have as singles and small multiples (four or less), used and mint. I have not counted the large number of remaindered blocks because these create a lopsided count...I will think a bit more about this issue.

	M.A.	M.G.	M.H.	M.I.	M.J.I.	M.M.	M.O.P.	M.R.C.	M..M	ALL
1c	22	25	18	22	25	33	44	41	5	235
2c	31	14	28	25	28	15	21	19	5	186
3c	18	8	4	10	21	9	4	6	1	81
5c	38	32	42	43	12	22	13	31	4	237
5ct	47	32	60	26	30	13	19	5		232
10c Type I	4	1	4	6	2	6	6	6	2	37
10c Type II	125	77	45	26	113	20	14	30		450
15c	10	12	3	12	7	12	6	13		75
20c JMG	13	11	12	7	27	12	13	24	1	120
20c MG	16	50	33	15	16	13	12	5		160
25c	33	31			30					94
30c 1E1	56	32	7	15	42	18	15	23		208
30c 1E2		4	2	34	1		17			58
50c		8					2			10
1pL	5	6	4	3	5	3	4	2		32
1p-top			2		1		7			10
1p 1E1	4	2	1							7
1p 1E2	2	4	5	4	9	1	6	5		36
			Not Issued			Unknown			Issues:	126

A selection of late "Servicio Oficial" stamps on paper

Here is a scan of the entire selection.

In this post I show some of the 10cBr and 20cSC stamps.



Several of the pieces have 1p Antarctica stamps.



Here is a clipping with the ever-popular Evita stamps.



Here is a selection of the 20cSC.





20cSC-SO and 1p-Antartica Official on piece

Here is a selection on paper. These are some of the last official usages of this series.











The 50c2C-SO on piece

Here is a small selection of this relatively rare stamp. The 1949 dates are consistent with its normal use.



BUENOS AIRES
1949.12.12
ARGENTINA





The 50c1L5z-SO on piece

This selection shows usages from 1955 and 1956.







Slightly doubled overprint on two 1p2C-SO stamps on piece

The first piece also bears a 50c2C-SO.



Here is the 1p stamp.



And here is a detail of the overprint.



The second piece has a 2pNGR-SO and a pair of the 25cCL-SO, the clay printing.



Here is a detail of the 1p stamp.



And here is a detail of the overprint showing doubling.



The 2 pesos has an overprint with a minor break to the V of SERVICIO.



High value 'Servicio Oficial' issues on piece

A single 1 peso stamp.



A 2pNGR-SO selection.





The 5pNGR-SO.



Two pieces with pairs of the regular issue 5P1L2 each with 50c 'SO' stamps.



The top stamp is the beautiful 'long scratch in background' plate variety.





