



Classic Stamp Forgeries

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Wednesday, December 16, 2020

La Guaira Ship Mail

In November 1863 Captain Robert Todd acquired from the Venezuelan government the right to carry mail between Caracas, La Guaira, Puerto Cabello, 75 miles to the west, and St. Thomas, in the Danish West Indies.

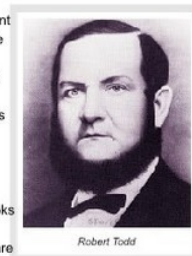
The concession was sold to Blohm, Nolting & Co. of Curacao, which took over the steamer, the Robert Todd, and issued special postage stamps.

At the beginning of 1866 the Curacao firm of J.A. Jesurun & Zoon bought the rights and continued the service, using first the issues of 1864 and, from 1868, stamps bearing their initials.

The Robert Todd, wrecked in 1868, was replaced by the Honfleur, and Curacao became the headquarters of the service.

The stamps themselves are listed in different order and numbers in 6 catalogs/books I have.

All the colors, perfs and stamp sized are likewise varied. To simplify matters they are listed here in the order they appear.



Robert Todd

Genuine Stamps

Features



The genuine stamps have many similar features

The left leg of the L has a shadow doubling.

The top right frame corner is broken.

Background lines on the right extend into the side letters.

There are several dashes and an end blob in the letters of CENTAVO.

Under the same letters there are several marks.

1864 1/2 Centavo



above - 1864 #1 Intense Black & 1a Greyish Black

There are 4 transfer types of the 1/2 stamp

Type I - Break in right hand outer frame line opposite RA of GUAIRA.

Type II - Break in bottom outer frame line under right hand corner ornament.

Type III - Deformed t in St.

Type IV - Break in top thin frame line between A and I of GUAIRA.

1868 1/2 Centavo - Black on yellowish paper



5 Transfer types

Type I - Coloured spot in white margin above second leg of U in GUAIRA

Spot in cross bar of H in THOMAS.

Type II - Coloured spot in upright of R in GUAIRA.

Type III - Large white flaw in vignette below P of PTo.

Type IV - Break in loop of Pin PTO.

Type V - Coloured nick in upright of L in LA.

Plate flaws

These are the most noticeable



Left, "GUMRA", middle large white spot, right, white line from U to E

Forgeries



A crude forgery.

The fraction is awkward with a wide 1

The background lines are thick and uneven

No dot after Centavo, PACKET or CABELLO



A very awkward fraction

The letters are smaller

The ornaments below Centavo are different.

NOTE - this may be a Torres forgery with a deliberate error - instead of Pto we have Pio



This is the previous forgery with a fake cancel

A decent forgery

Background lines are broken

Centavo has small letters is not inside a ribbon frame. There is no end dot

The fraction is shorter



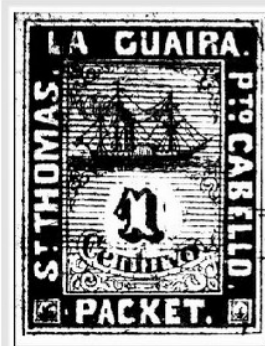
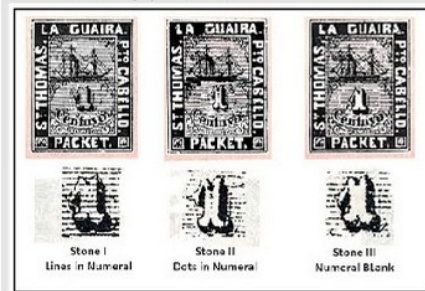
A very crude forgery
Overall very indistinct heavy shading
The fraction is very large
The a in Centavo looks like a u
Letters are short and thin



Poor facsimile taken from a 1964
philatelic exhibition card
Very indistinct design and shading
Background lines are heavy and uneven

1864 1 Centavo

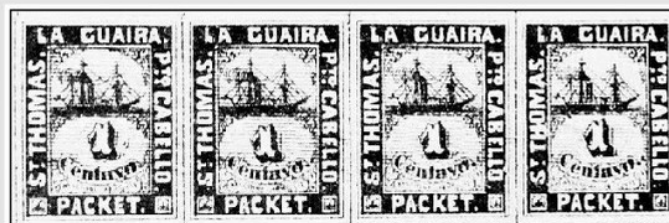
3 stones were made for this value with very specific features.



The lines in numeral feature of Stone I does not apply in one specific case of the position 19 (shown above) on the sheet where the stamp shows no lines in the numeral.



1C 1864, 1865, 1868-70 on different color paper



The type III stone has 4 sub-types (image above) with the following features

Type I - The lines on either side of the numeral are on different levels; the t in Centavo is to the left of the cleft in the numeral; there are three short curved lines on the right of the numeral.

Type II - The lines on either side of the numeral are still uneven; the t in Centavo is under the cleft in the numeral; no curved lines on right of numeral.

Type III - Bad breaks in lines on left of numeral; the t in Centavo is to the left of the cleft in the numeral; one short line on right of numeral.

Type IV - The lines on either side of numeral almost even and on same level; two short marks on right of numeral.

Forgeries



Poor forgery
Letters are thinner
The 1 is larger
Ship is indistinct
No period after Centavo
Thick background lines



Poor forgery
Letters are very thin
The 1 is larger
Ship is indistinct
Lacking background lines
Centavo letters are spread out



Decent forgery
Side letters are narrower
The 1 is higher on the left top
Large flag on fore mast
Ship is larger

1864 2 Centavo

There are no lines across the figure of value.

The earlier printings were in a more intense black than the later issues, and the paper varies in shade from green to bluish green which may be a chemical reaction of the ink used.



There are 4 transfer types.

Type I (shown above) - The lines on the left of the numeral are on different levels and do not meet
The t in Centavo is to the left of the cleft in the bottom of the 2
White flaw over H in THOMAS.

Type II - The lines on the left of the numeral are more regular and almost meet
The t in Centavo is to the right of the cleft in the 2
Slight break in cap of t in Centavo.

Type III - Lines on left of numeral almost regular
The t in Centavo is under the cleft in the 2
Top of t in Centavo is broken

Short diagonal line on right of bottom of numeral.

Type IV - Lines on left of numeral almost on same level with small breaks
The t in Centavo is well to the right of the cleft in the 2
No deformity on top of the t in Centavo

Forgeries



Very crude forgery
Letters are uneven in size and position
Letters are thin
Background lines are coarse and widely separated.



Very crude forgery
Letters vary in size
2 is oddly shaped and large
The ship is indistinct



A reasonable forgery
The top G looks more like a C
The 2 is wide and oddly shaped
The ship is larger

1868-70 2 Centavo on bluish paper with lines in the numeral



Forgeries

The forgeries match the Greenish-Blue but none of the numerals have lines.



Poor crude forgery
Very large ship
Odd 2 with large foot
The O in CABELLO is too round
Letters are large



Poor forgery
Letters are shaped unevenly
Tail on the 2 is too long
Background lines are uneven



Fair forgery
Letters are uneven
Background lines are uneven and broken
The ship lacks rigging

3 Centavo



1864 Deep Yellow and 1868-70 Brownish yellow with lines in the numeral
Some stamps on the sheet, the lines are faint.



4 transfer types

Type I - The horizontal line above the numeral is almost missing

There are three horizontal lines across the C of Centavo

Type II - The horizontal lines on either side of the numeral do not join up

The spacing between the two horizontal lines above the numeral is not even

There are only two lines across the C of Centavo.

Type III - There is only one line across the C of Centavo

The horizontal lines on both sides of the numeral almost joined and level

Type IV - There are no lines across the C of Centavo

The lines on either side of the numeral almost joined and level

Forgeries



Fair forgery

Uneven, broken background lines

Ship different shape

3 is wider

No ribbon around Centavo and smaller letters



Good forgery

3 is slightly inclined to the left

Thick smoke

No dot after Centavo

Letters generally thinner



Fair forgery

S in Centavos not in original

Thick smoke

3 is very high

Large letters in right frame



Poor forgery

3 inclined

Coarse uneven background lines

No dot after Centavo

Letters different sizes and uneven

Very crude forgery

Thin letters

Large 3

Few uneven background lines

Heavy shading



4 Centavo



1864 Type I Black on Blue & 1868-70 Type II Black on Green with lines in the numeral



4 transfer types

Type I - Three lines across C of Centavo

Lines of shading on right of cross-bar of 4 partially doubled
Horizontal and curved lines above "a" of Centavo are broken

Two horizontal lines between "tav" and the heavy shading of the numeral.

Type II - No horizontal lines across C of Centavo

Breaks in horizontal lines above numeral

A pearl on top of numeral

Dots on left of numeral and short curved dash on right.

Type III - Break in foresail of ship below top sail

No lines across C of Centavo

Large break in horizontal line above numeral.

Type IV - Three lines across C of Centavo

One horizontal line between "tav" and heavy shading of numeral

Small sloping line joining A of GUAIRA and P of PTO.

Forgeries



Poor forgery

Wide squat 4

Uneven thin letters

Heavy shading particularly in the ship



Poor forgery

The 4 is similar to the previous forgery

The letters in Centavo are spread apart

as is the St and the T

The letters are generally thicker

Background lines are broken

Cancels

Genuine below



Fakes below

