

Finland's First Stamps

The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries

This is an Educational Exhibit in Progress

This presentation does not deal with the problems of forged or modified cancels on genuine material, or the creation of valuable covers made by adding genuine stamps. Examples of such items are shown in some of the references, and a discussion with illustrations would be an invaluable addition here. Unfortunately it is beyond the experience of this author to do justice to such a task. Please also realize that all potentially genuine material should seek expert confirmation, especially of all covers and 5 kop items. The value of some items, for example less than perfect 10 kop stamps, or for that matter any faulty or damaged items, may not justify the expense of expertization – even if it doesn't eliminate the need for an expert's opinion.

This exhibit is intended to emphasize a research focused approach to Finnish stamp collecting in general, and to the detection of the forgery and misrepresentation challenges in philately. Traditional philatelic exhibits make every effort to avoid forged material, but this leaves unused an educational opportunity that would likely be helpful to both the collector and dealer community. With the increased connectivity of the collector and dealer community via the Internet, this exhibit is hoped to be a beginning for classic Finnish forgery reference information.

This exhibit is described as “An Exhibit in Progress” because it is fully intended to regularly make additions and corrections to this exhibit as new detail, photos, and information come our way.

These current 39 pages with 74 illustrations are really a “First Draft” presentation as we look for comments, suggestions, questions, and input.

Introduction

Finland has luckily not been a country getting much focus by history's serious stamp forgers, but the fairly crude forgeries of the first issues still are a plague to less experienced collectors because they are fairly plentiful. Fournier did produce a serious forgery of the 5 kop that I consider dangerous for the unsuspecting. That one, along with forgeries of the 5 mark and 10 mark 1889 issue and the 3 ½ and 7 R of the 1891 issue corrected to show the proper two outer frame lines, were not in the Fournier reference albums produced in 1928 by the Swiss philatelic society, L'Union Philatélique de Genève, and can sometimes be hard to identify without some magnification.

The Expertization of these Oval Issues calls for an exact identification of the ink color, paper and paper orientation, cancel, and a positive match with other known material, as well as intensive inspection for any possible faults, modifications, or repairs. **The first step, and the focus here, is to try to give the information necessary to eliminate items that are not real stamps.**

Perhaps the easiest way is to realize how these stamps were printed, which is uniquely unusual! They were printed one-at-a-time by being impressed from an inked metal cliché. When comparing one stamp to another, you will find that except for wear and changes to the cliché over time, the design variations are mainly due to differences in the inking. A great help in identifying these stamps is then having access to a good reference picture.

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The 5 Kopeck Stamps



Figure 1
Genuine Stamp



Figure 2
Genuine Pair

[Last appeared in the Hellman Sale-2-25-2006]
Shows inking variation but design consistency, one stamp to the next

Comparing these with, for example, the Fournier forgeries, which are typically with Fournier's forged WIBORG box cancel with the unreadable dating:



Figure 3
Fournier's "best" Forgery

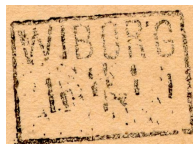


Figure 4
Approximation of Fournier's WIBORG cancel

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Figure 5

Some Other Fournier Cancels to Recognize
[Less likely to have been used on Oval Issue forgeries]

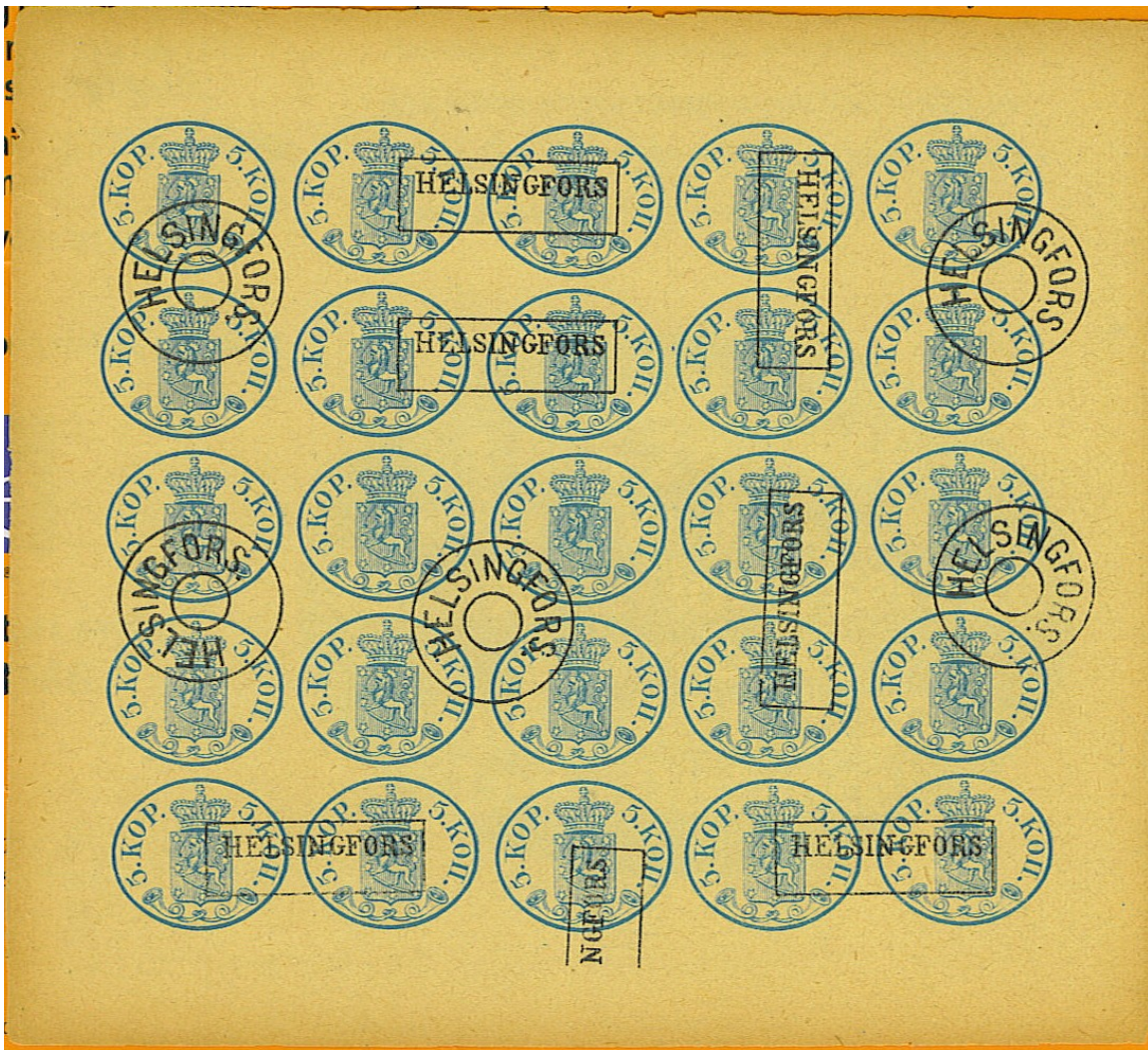


Figure 6

The prolific Fournier 5 kop forgery

This forgery was printed in sheets of 25. The stamp design and cancel design are somewhat fanciful, but examples can still be found in many collections identified as the real stamp.

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Following Fournier's "best forgery," the "quality" of the Oval forgeries generally goes downhill – but they are even more plentiful. The most plentiful is one that was probably created by Spiro, although I believe his stock was acquired by Fournier, as Fournier sold them for decades. They were produced in sheets of 25, and a block of 20 is shown on the cover of the 1977 book "Forgeries of Finnish Postage Stamps" by Mikko Ossa. This book, in Finnish and English, has numerous pictures of many oval issue forgeries, and I understand most of the material was from the Gummesson forgery collection. Unfortunately, because the pictures are small, and there is no genuine material illustrated for comparison, it is only a "first step" in the identification process.



Figure 7

The prolific Fournier 10 kop forgery

This forgery was also printed in sheets of 25. The stamp design and cancel design match the 5 kop forgery, but examples can still be found in many collections identified as the real stamp.

Basically, the design and cancel detail of these Fournier 5 and 10 kop items shown in Figures 6 and 7 are identical, and technically single examples can be "plated" based on the pattern of the cancel placement, which is always the same. Note that there are no Finnish cancels resembling the circular one, and the low box style imitates the Helsingfors low box cancel, but without its date, that was discontinued in 1851 – well before these stamps were issued. Examples of this forgery were included in the 1928 Fournier forgery reference albums.

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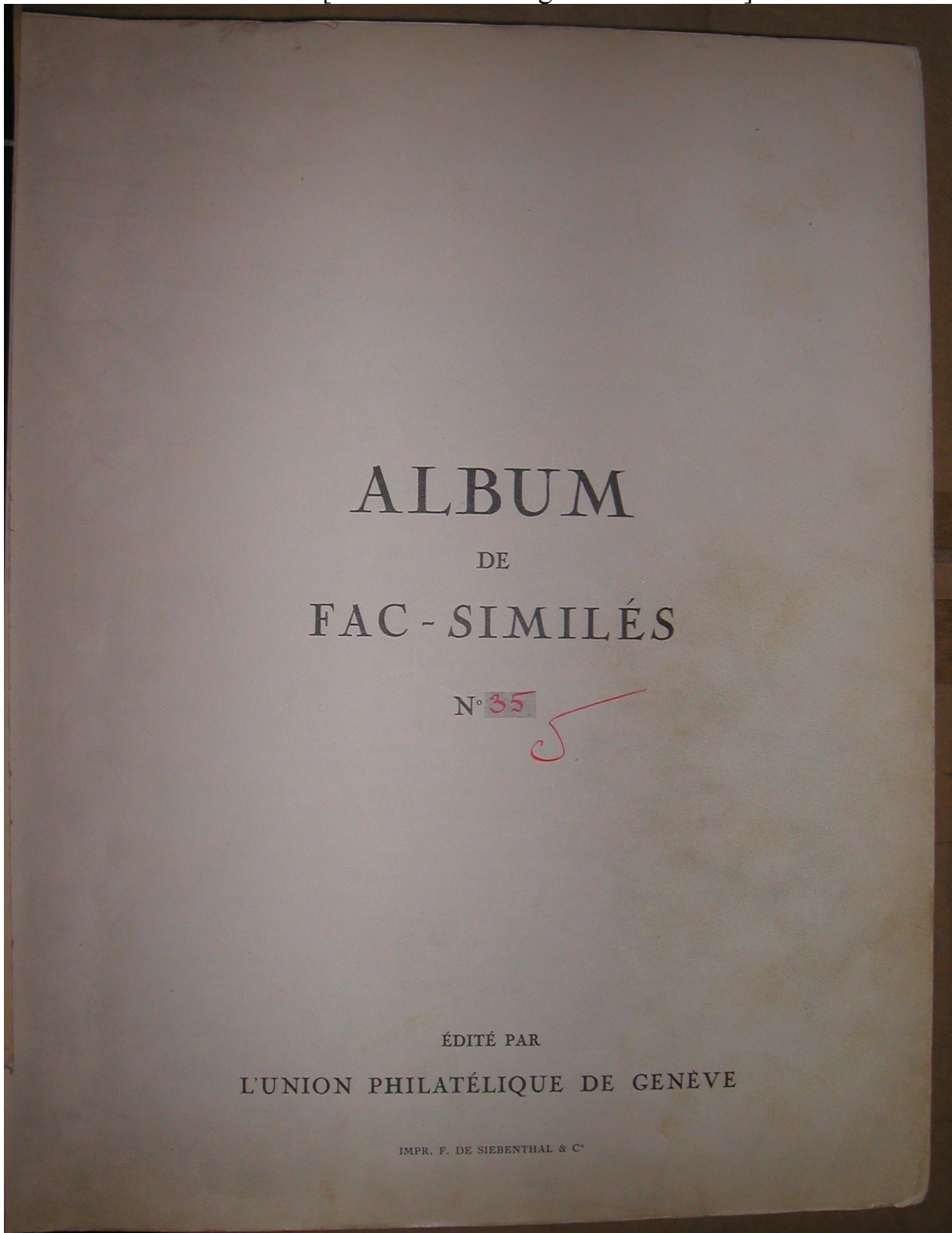


Figure 8

A Fournier 1928 Reference Album

Bill Claghorn has done an impressive job posting his Fournier Album on the Internet at the site:

<http://www.geocities.com/claghorn1p/FournierAlbum/intro/aj.htm>

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Figure 9

The typical Finland page in the Fournier Album

There are only 3 items provided, along with some of his serious forged cancel examples. Another similar page is shown at <http://www.geocities.com/claghorn1p/FournierAlbum/010/010.htm>

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Figure 10

An Addendum Fournier page

Some of the Albums [here from Book #35] have some additional reference pages labeled "Pages Réservées Aux Experts". Here there are 8 additional Finland items. All Album items are always stamped FAUX.

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There is less provenance for the other Finnish forgeries. As far as I know, Fournier was the only legit copier of genuine material, filling a demand for “excellent reproductions” of unavailable or expensive stamps. He didn’t deliberately produce anything that could be used to defraud the post, and widely advertised his wares as reproductions. Other forgers undoubtedly avoided the limelight. Anyway, examples of their material, too, still fills many old albums – and continually finds its way into new collections, too.

Here is a partial collection of photos to illustrate some of this material.

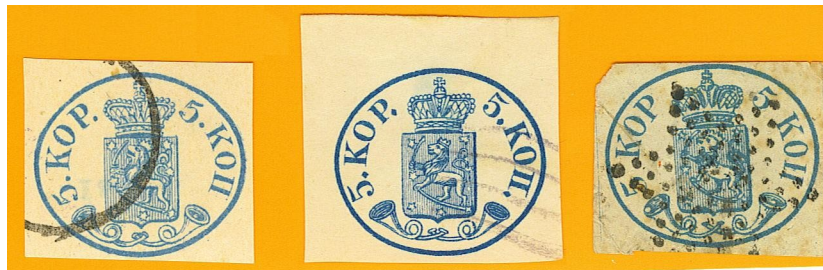


Figure 11

5 kop Forgeries without Secret Mark between crown & shield



Figure 12

Many 5 kop Forgeries are missing at least one “dot” of the four in the “5 KOP” text



Figure 13

Many forgeries were printed with lines between the stamps to show where scissors could be used to cut them apart. Here is an example where 3 sides still show those lines.



Figure 14

Some other 5 kop forgeries

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Figure 15

5 kop Forgery matching most design detail
-Does it resemble the 1892 Reprint?-



Figure 16

A 5 kop Tête-Bêche Forgery with a forged 1856 Swedish Box cancel. Note these are oriented the wrong way. The genuine examples are always “head-to-head”.

The Official Reprints

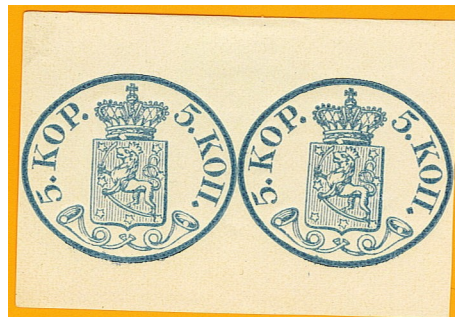


Figure 17

5 kop Reprints from 1862-1881

There is a fairly good description of the different official reprints in the Facit Catalog. The two of 1862, the 1871, and the 1881 reprints were all made from the original die, which for the 5 kop value had had the posthorn “pearls” enlarged in 1858. Items claimed to be reprints that have small pearls are not reprints, as

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all the following printings, including all the reprints, have large pearls.

These four reprints all were impressed with an inked cliché, and the printed result will show that. Additionally, a small color spot was added to the right in the crown's cross, but this doesn't always show. It's only good for identification if it is clearly there. This is shown in additional photos in Figure 74.

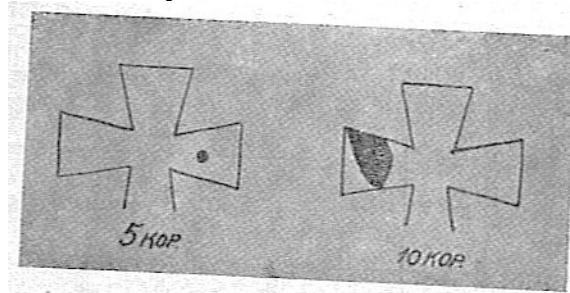


Figure 18

Grosfils-Berger's drawing of the way reprint marks sometimes look. The 5 kop can show a small dot in the right arm of the cross, and the 10 kop can show a small dot in the left cross arm. See the photos in Figure 74.

Surely some reprints have bogus cancels added to appear to be genuine used stamps, but more often, reprints are offered as genuine mint stamps. Some have signatures, expertizing marks and small hand-stamps to suggest proof of that, but even if they are genuine marks, perhaps they just attest to the item being a genuine reprint. One unused 10 kop in hand has supposed backstamps of both Richter and of Krueger, and did sell at auction as an unused Scott #2, but it is only a cliché printed genuine reprint, with frameline dent and dot in cross.



Figure 19

The 1881 Reprint strip of 10 [Expertized, and signed]

Hard to see any "dot" in right part of cross. Inking varies too much. The most distinctive dot is shown in the right end stamp. No separate dot shows in the adjacent stamp to its left. This is shown in Figure 74.



Figure 20

Enlarged three stamps at left end of 1881 strip in Figure 19.

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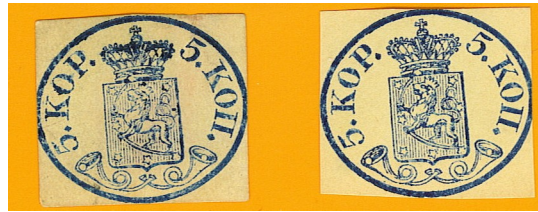


Figure 21

Other reprint items. One clearly shows a dot in the cross.



Figure 22

Bought as the 1881 reprint, but I cannot confirm that.

The so called “Grand Duke Printings” or the Reprints of 1892, were done with new clichés. These were done in sheets of 20 [4 x 5] of all upright stamps – no tête-bêche – by letterpress. This I will call lithography.



Figure 23

The 1892 Lithographed Reprints

Finally, in 1956, for the anniversary of these first issues of 1856, reprints were issued and distributed with a 160 page book by the philatelist Leo Linder. Just about these 1856 stamps, this book, “Finlands Ovalmärken” was published by the Post- and Telegraph Office. Although in Swedish, it is an excellent reference with a lot of detail about the stamps’ usages, although as you might expect, it ignores forgeries. It is not hard to find, but without the reprints any longer included. These, too, were again printed with new clichés, and they are clearly watermarked posthorns – so there is no identification problem.

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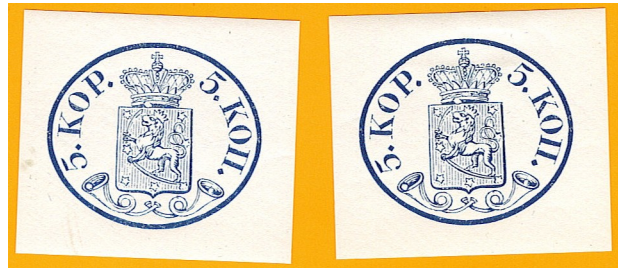


Figure 24
The 1956 Reprints

The 10 Kopeck Stamps

The 10 kopeck stamps were similarly made, but some design details are slightly different. The most obvious are that unlike the 5 kopeck, the secret mark under the crown is smaller and round, and there is no “large pearl in posthorn” design change. Letter shape and spacing is different, too.



Figure 25
Genuine Stamp
Note edge of tête-bêche stamp shows at top

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Figure 26
A genuine strip of 3
[Last appeared in Hellman Sale]
Shows inking variation but design consistency, one stamp to the next



Figure 27
10 kop Forgeries without Secret Mark between crown & shield



Figure 28
Pearl under crown, but still missing at least one "dot" of the four in the "10 KOP" text



Figure 29
Many forgeries were printed with lines between the stamps to show where scissors could be used to cut them apart. Here is an example where bottom side still shows that line.

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Figure 30

Another 10 kop forgery – Design detail matches fairly well.



Figure 31

A 10 kop Tête-Bêche Forgery with a forged 1856 Swedish Box cancel. Note these are oriented the wrong way. The genuine examples are always “head-to-head”. [This forgery apparently may show a slight dent in the left shield frameline, and does show a dot in the left arm of the cross.]

The 10 Kop Official Reprints



Figure 32

The reprint without the dent in the left frame-line of the shield, but with the dot in the left arm of the cross.

An example of a typical dent, enlarged, is shown in Figures 72 and 73, and a typical dot in the cross in Figure 74. The cliché photo shown in Figure 38 is not clear enough to show the dent, but it should be there.

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Figure 33

Only the 1862 Reprints were made to include Tête-Bêche arrangements
Note the dent in the left shield frameline just above the center star. This damage happened at the end of the oval period.



Figure 34

10 kop Reprints from 1862-1881



Figure 35

10 kop Reprint pair

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Figure 36

Three of the 10 kop 1892 Lithographed Reprints



Figure 37

The 10 kop 1956 Reprints.

Both the 1892 and the 1956 10 kop reprint design have copied the “dent” flaw similar to Figure 73.

Printing

- Lithography versus inked metal cliché -

As mentioned, all the forgeries appear to be lithographed. Only in the 1890's for Finland's 1892-1893 reprints did the Government first use lithography for stamp printing. There is another excellent reference about stamp forgery that appears in the November 1979 "Posthorn" - a discussion and a copy of the British Philatelic Association's Book and Album that they created following the buy-out of the forgery stock of Sperati. This basically followed the model of the 1928 Swiss buyout of Fournier's stock, incidentally. Their discussion runs as follows:

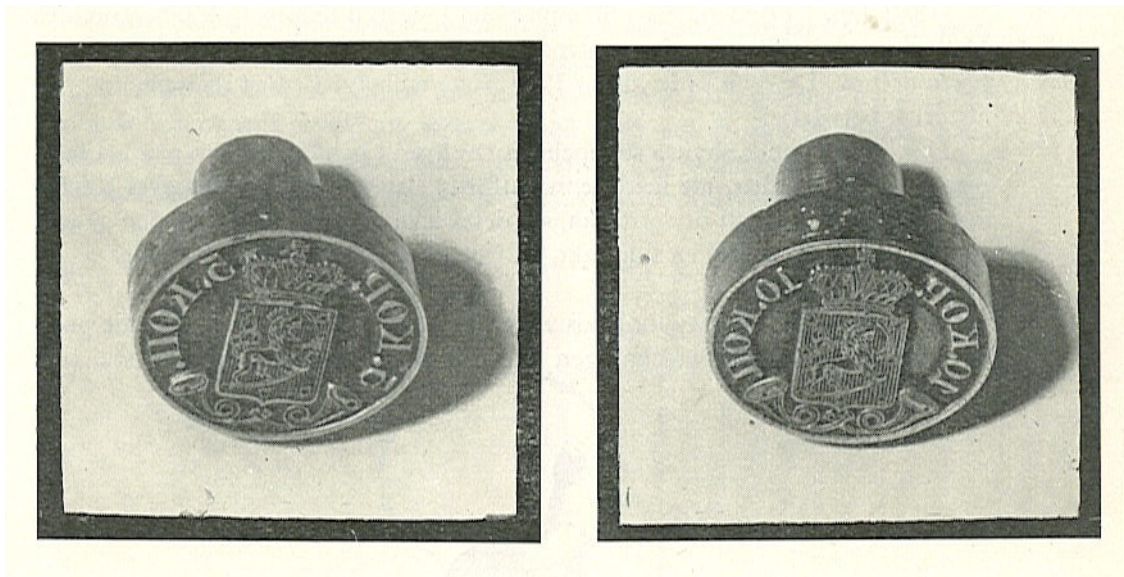


Figure 38

The two clichés

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These stamps were printed by means of a small hand-lever press, producing only one impression with each stroke. In the printing of these stamps, narrow strips of paper were employed, the printing commenced from left to right, until 10 impressions had been struck. Then the strip was reversed and 10 additional impressions were made along the other edge of the strip, thus producing 10 tête-bêche pairs. Packages of five such sheets, for a total of 100 impressions, were then packaged together. Some opinions were that these strips were cut down the center at the post offices before sale, effectively destroying potential tête-bêche pairs. I believe no full sheets of 20 are known or even photographed.

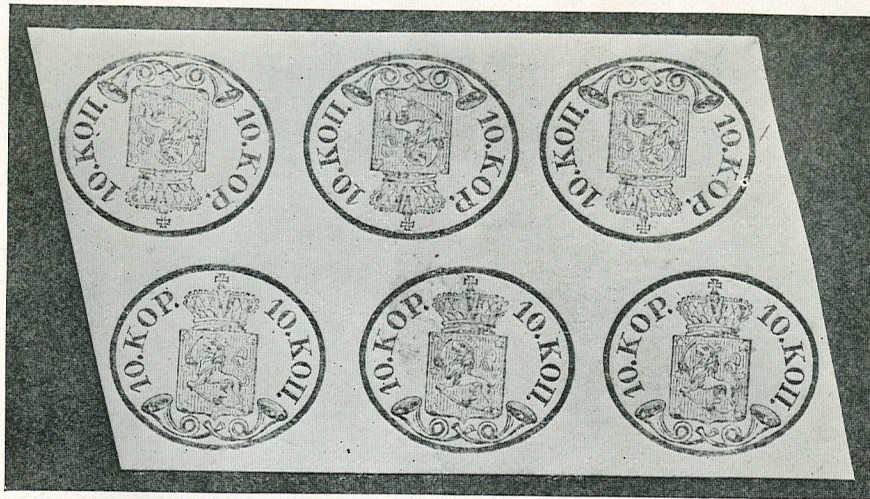


Figure 39

A six-block is now described as the largest tête-bêche block known. This block would have been cut from the paper strip imprinted with a “double row” of stamps. This was in the Fabergé sale in London in 1940.

When an inked cliché is pressed against paper in the printing process, there is an effect called “ink squeeze” that will appear along some of the edges of printed lines. The extent of this depends on the ink, how much ink is applied, the paper, and the pressure used. For these oval issues, it is usually pretty easy to see the “ink squeeze” effect at different places along the oval frameline. This is shown in the drawing in Figure 41.

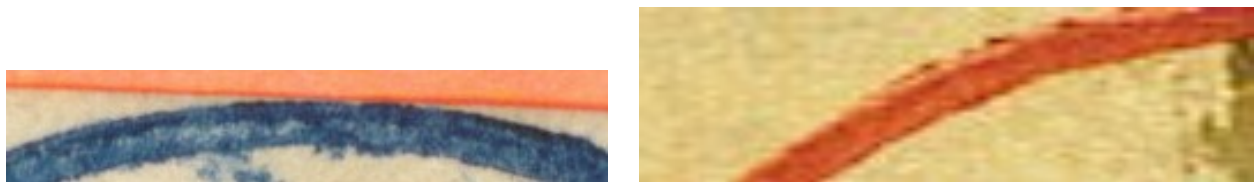


Figure 40

Strong “Ink Squeeze” visible on both the oval of the blue 5 kop and the oval of the red 10 kop Frameline

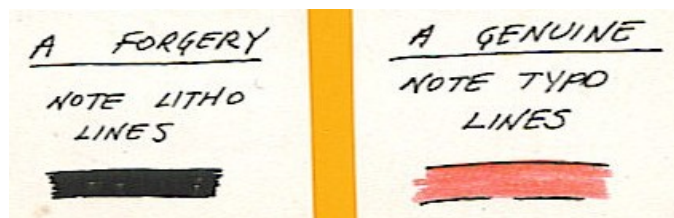


Figure 41

The Genuine item’s “Ink Squeeze” causes heavier inking on some line edges

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Neither the Lithographed Reprints [Figures 23 and 36] nor any of the forgeries show variation in the outer oval frameline inking. However, the genuine cliché printed stamps, stationery, and reprints prior to 1892 all show various degrees of ink squeeze. Some are especially dramatic. One caution: a forgery made via a photographic process may reproduce the image of some spots of ink squeeze, but I don't recall having noticed this on these oval issues. Most of these forgeries are not so well done.

The Paper

There are a number of different papers used for these stamps, and identifying them is a real specialty beyond this presentation. Also, how many were used may not be known definitely. During this period, there is wove paper, and also narrow laid and wide laid paper. Some paper shows various watermarks. For the stamp printings, the paper is vertically laid. Whether the paper is made by the sheet or made into a continuous roll, there is a "direction" built into the paper as it is made. Apparently, the paper has different qualities that can be identified or described whether looking at the paper in the direction it moves through the papermaking process or is rolled up in, versus looking at the properties in the direction perpendicular to that.

As an example, laid paper will absorb humidity differently along the laid lines versus at an angle 90° to the laid lines. This can be seen with a perfectly clean piece of paper exposed to humidity on one side, where the direction of preferred absorbing will expand that surface slightly and cause the paper to curl toward the less-humidity side. Similarly, the unseen direction of unwatermarked wove paper can be identified with a humidity test – if the paper is clean and free from gum, hinges, paper not soaked away, repairs, etc.

The Three Assumptions, and Stationery Cut-squares versus Postage Stamps

Based on the two assumptions that the paper strips that these stamps were printed on were always oriented in line with the direction of the paper production, and the impressed stamps were always printed close to straight up and down, a meaningful paper direction test is often possible. [Assumes no stamps printed like appears in Figure 43, for example.] This is because of the third assumption – the identically printed postal stationery that now exists as cut squares, much of it on wove, unwatermarked paper, have been printed with the paper direction diagonal to the upright stamp design. Figure 44 shows a small pearls 5 kop postal stationery entire with a nice boxed WIBORG 1857 cancel on wove, unwatermarked paper.

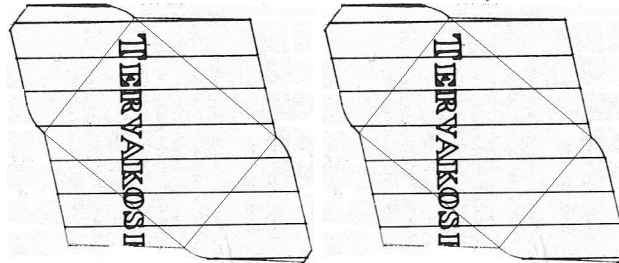


Figure 42

The pattern of the envelopes before folding and printing. The 4 diagonal folds to shape the rectangular envelope are drawn in for clarity. Minimizing paper waste typically calls for the cutting of the envelope form close together and oriented in the direction of paper manufacture. This is true for most countries' postal stationery.

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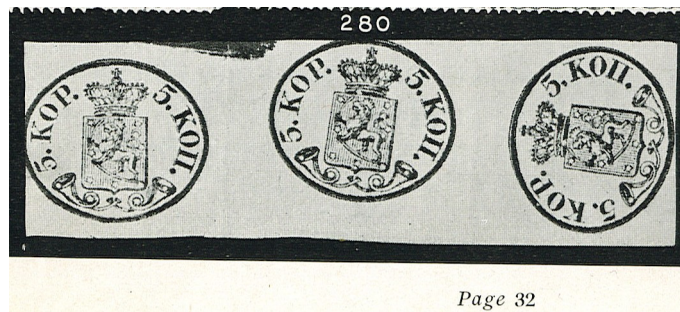


Figure 43

This amazing item is described as a “Proof” in the 1939 [1940] Fabergé sale, as lot 280 on page 32. These proofs may have only been made in preparation for making the 1862 Reprints. I have not seen any information indicating a stamp was ever printed like this - at 90° to the normal printing direction! [There is current opinion that this item may not be genuine – perhaps that means it is looked upon as printer’s waste or worse.]

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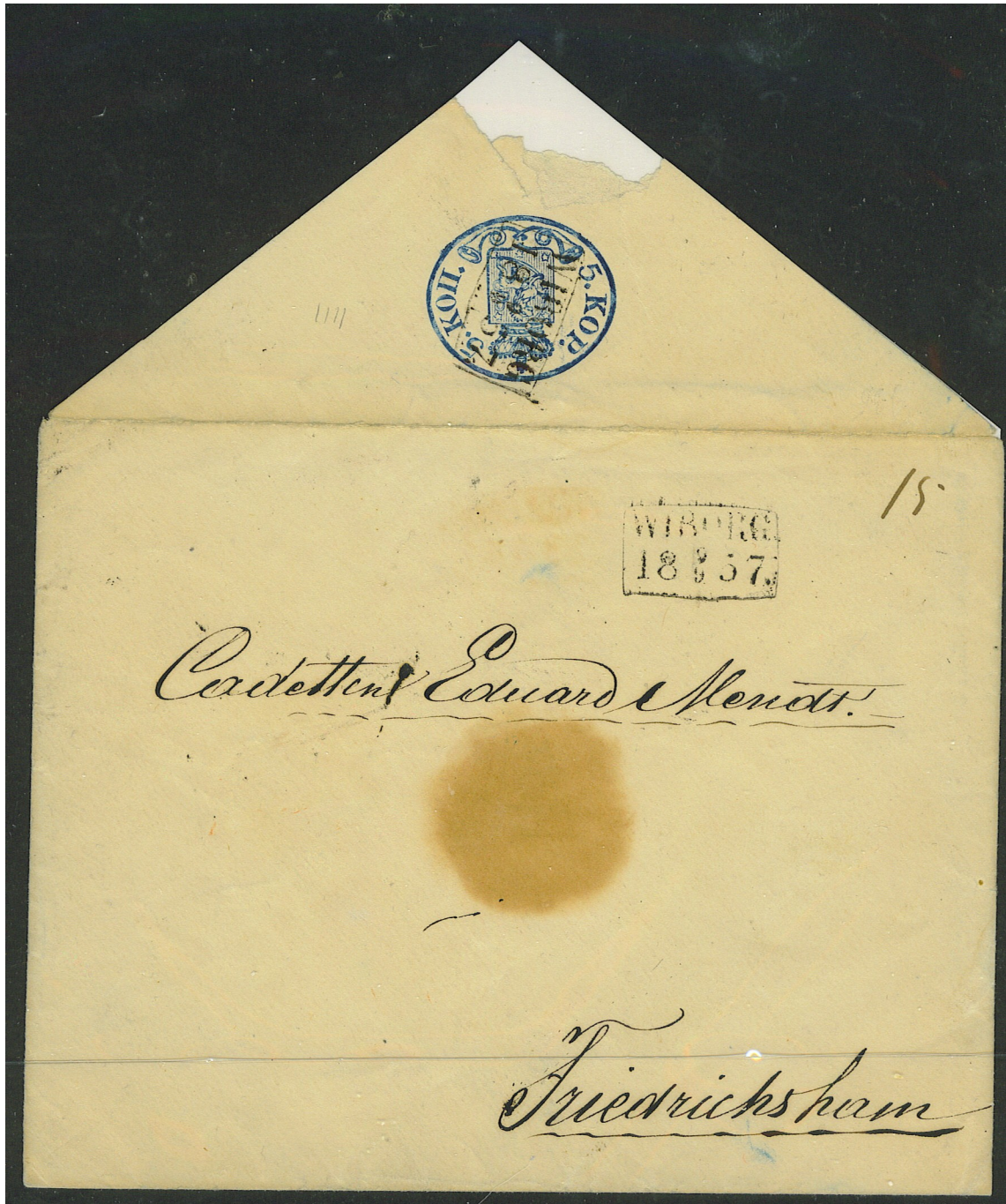


Figure 44
A wove paper 5 kop postal stationery entire

Looking at the drawing in Figure 42, and picturing the folded result when the envelope is made up by folding along the solid lines as drawn in Figure 42, the resultant upright stamp impression will always be diagonal to the direction of the paper manufacture. For the envelopes printed on laid paper, we do find that the laid lines are always diagonal to the stamp design. However, for wove paper, this "Third Assumption" allows us to test for paper direction, and separate genuine postage stamps from stationery cut-outs.

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Figure 45 - Cardboard wetted, not soaked, and all excess water blotted away with a napkin or tissue.



Figure 46

Set item flat and face down on damp area. There should be no water to wet the stamp.
There also should be no gum or hinge remnants like item here shows!

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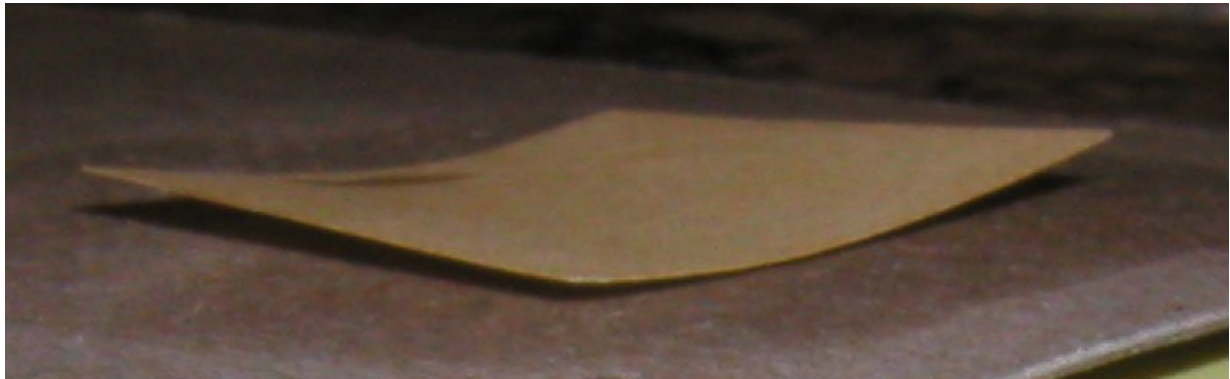


Figure 47 - Item begins to curl

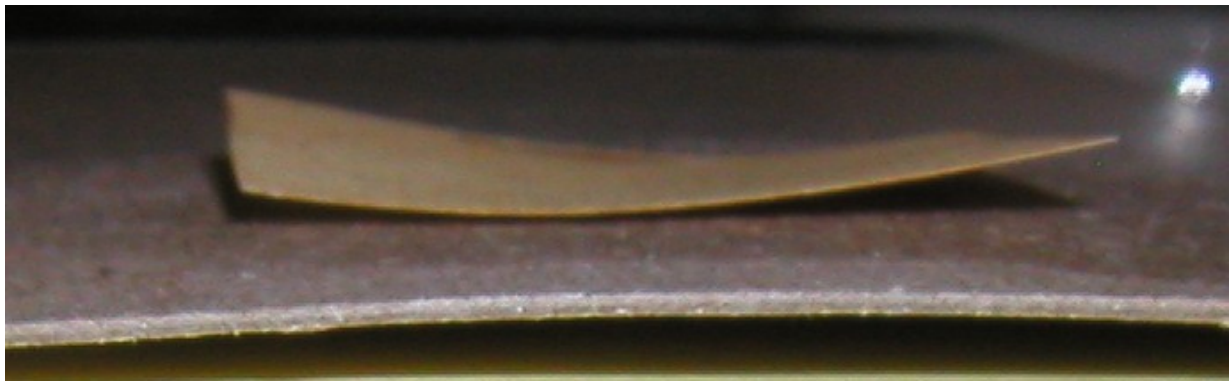


Figure 48 - Item curling about a diagonal line
Conclusion – Postal Stationery cut out.

Additional Forgery Risks & Examination Notes

Whenever there is a subtle paper test, there is risk that forgers will undertake things to defeat the test. I have recently read that in German philately, stamps have been found where the surface appearance of the paper has been modified to appear or act like the paper of a different stamp printing. The paper appears as if it would, or actually does, curl differently when one side is exposed to humidity. Such a treatment could probably be done to make stationery cut-outs look more like stamp paper, or appear to “test” more like the stamp paper.

Additionally, there may be another risk. Because the genuine Finnish papers used vary in thickness, etc., possibly a thin layer of added paper, and coatings applied to the original paper, or over or under the added paper, could change both the surface appearance and the original humidity-curling character of the item.

Finally, I’ll add some of the things I have seen on Finnish stamps:

- Repairs that are easily detected only in watermark fluid. It is important to follow a procedure, examining the wetting, and drying cycle, and being cautious of the stamp printing inks, including some reds.
- Repairs that do not show at all in watermark fluid.
- Repairs that show under a UV light. Both long and short seem to work OK.
- Repairs that do not show under a UV light.

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-Removed ink cancels that show faintly in photographs, as in an auction catalog, but in real life are almost invisible to the naked eye.

- Pictures cut from stamp albums, magazines, or auction catalogs offered as genuine oval stamps, reprints, trial proofs, or essays. For example, a black 5 kop that was just a cut-out from a stamp album.

I am not a specialist in this area – just an interested collector of Finnish stamps generally, along with a modest collection of the forgeries. Just imagine the junk that an expertizer must see!

Lastly, I am encouraging that a higher powered “dissecting microscope” is a fun thing to have around the house. Such a binocular microscope, as a college student might use in biology, with a total of 20x, or even 40x, without extra attachments or accessories, is enough to open up a whole new world, and is pretty good for stamp collectors. Expertizers have some better equipment, which is also more expensive. Normally, I do think it is important to use at least a 10x magnifier whenever you examine something – and that probably does the job 80% of the time.

Other Postal Stationery

There are the 1850 postal stationery issues that came out six years before the stamps, and although they do not have the secret marks, they were in use throughout the 1850's and could be mistaken for the stamps if cut out of their envelopes, and especially if a cancel obscures the key identification points. The earliest known usage of a regular 1856 Oval issue stamp is 3 March 1856.



Figure 49

Unused 1850 Postal Stationery



Figure 50

Postal Stationery – nice 1854 cancel

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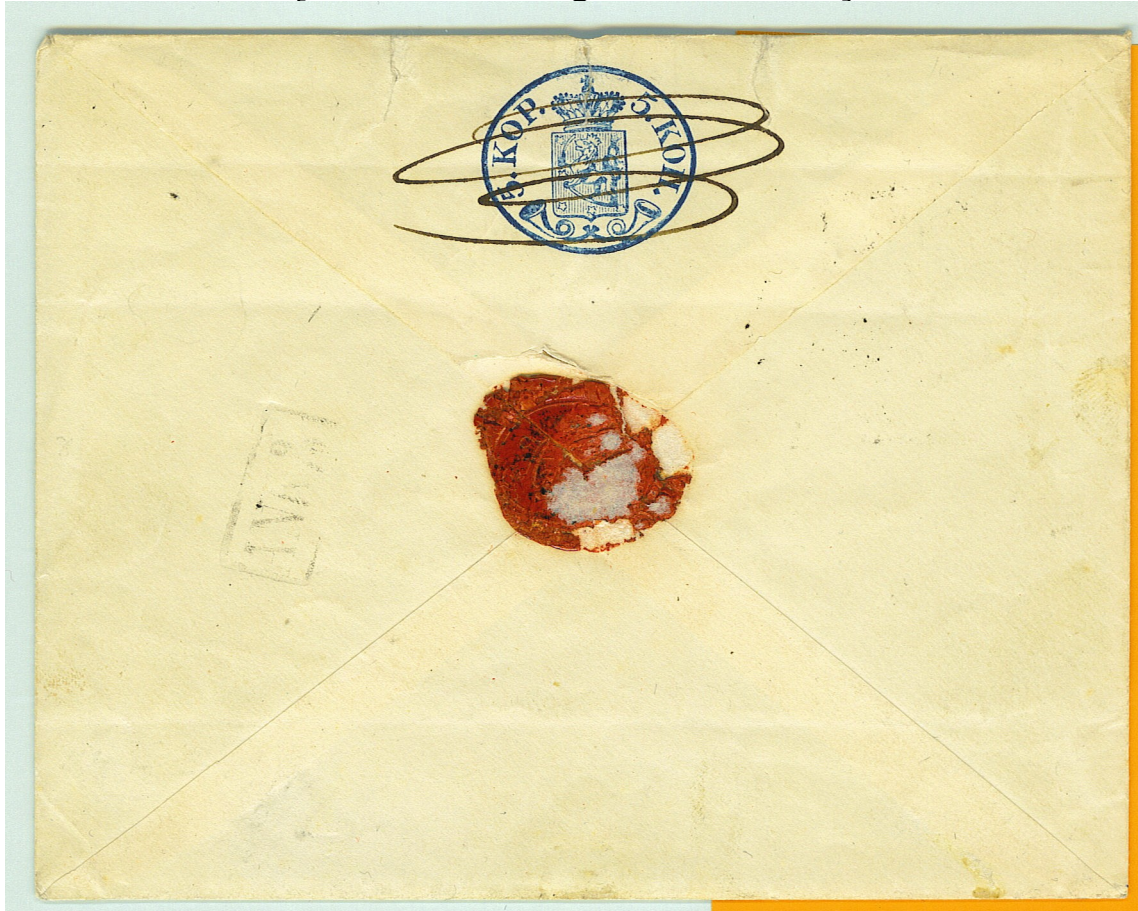


Figure 51 - Lovisa 8 October 1857 usage, Helsingfors ANK for 9 October.
1850 Postal Stationery



Figure 52 - 1850 Postal Letter Sheet cut square
Bluish Paper – Wiborg 1857 Cancel

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Figure 53

Postal Stationery Letter Sheet piece with 5 kop small pearls stamp as additional franking
[With expertizing certificates – see one in Figure 63]



Figure 54

1856 Postal Stationery cut-round used as postage stamp.

On piece, with expertizing Certificate, actually quite unusual and probably very few such usages known either on piece or on cover. Note this issue has the pearls in the posthorns, and a pearl under the crown. This item can easily be identified as the postal stationery cut-out because it is on the strongly watermarked diagonal lined paper. The earlier 1850 stationery issue was not supposed to be valid for postage when cut out of an envelope, but this 1856 stationery issue was.

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Figure 55

The Demonetized Stationery.

Both 5 kop and 10 kop Oval stamped envelopes were demonetized and imprinted with new 1860 style stamps. They were demonetized with sometimes neat, but often heavy and sloppy ink marks, and apparently often stacked open and with the cancel ink wet, as many show ink impressions on the front and back of the envelope flap.

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Figure 56 - A 10 kop demonetized on envelope piece seen from front.



Figure 57

The same item seen from back. Such items, almost certainly the demonetized stationery cut squares, are regularly seen in collections, and also offered as examples of the genuine postage stamps.

Postal Stationery Reprints

There is a note in the Facit Catalog stating that the 1893 reprints were made with old and new dies. I am not sure what that means. I would guess that “new dies” probably refers to the items made by lithography. I also might guess that if the old dies were used, some items may have been made using a hand press to make the stamp impressions much as the earlier stamps, stationery, and prior reprints were made. This might help explain why the two covers below appear to have the stamp design somewhat impressed into the paper. Both do show some “embossing” of the stamp design into the envelope, and also some ink squeeze, etc. Another 10 kop envelope example [not shown] shows very slight embossing at a few points, and the envelope is glued together normally. [All of course show the shield frame line “dent” and the mark in the left arm of the cross.] The Facit Catalog also indicates that only about 75 examples of each 1893 reprint cover may have been made, although other notes with the covers mention the number “125”.



Figure 58 - Described as 1893 Facit listed reprints, envelopes are unglued. I cannot verify status.

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The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries [An Exhibit in Progress - Continued]

Other Cautions



Figure 59 - A 10 kop round-cut item may be added to piece.

Questions about “cancel painting,” forged cancels, removed and added cancels has not yet been addressed in this exhibit.



Figure 60 - A 10 kop “dry print”

Note “beading up” of the printing ink, which would be unusual for these oval issue stamps. Additionally, ANK canceled examples, although known, are quite unusual. However, the next issue, the 1860 stamps, are frequently seen with ANK cancels. This item needs further study. Do you have an example of a “dry printing” of this issue?



Figure 61 - A 5 kop with paper differences

Paper was apparently acquired for each printing run, so there are significant differences over time. Additionally, can the printing angle to the paper direction also vary too much? Here there is no clear indication of any removed cancel, but item needs additional study because of paper or printing differences. Because it has small pearls, not the large pearls, it is not one of the reprints.

Certificates of Expertization

There are several things to consider in seeking an expert opinion. Are you certain what an item is, or are there any aspects of its identification that are uncertain? Will you improve your own understanding of the material by getting an expert’s help? What ideally do you want an expertizing certificate to say, or to confirm?

My suggestion is to have the certificate definitely identify as much as possible about the item. For example, the town and date of the cancel – no matter how obvious it seems, the printing and color if that is known and especially if specialized catalogs make such a breakdown, and confirmation that the item is as it appears, and is undamaged and unrepaired. Items that are “signed” are usually a disappointment, and many names

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have no meaning to me. I do find that many oval items are signed by someone, but all too often the items are either the fakes, the genuine stationery cut-outs, or the genuine reprints – but are not the real stamps.

If the item is not as it appears, it often makes sense to request return of the item without a certificate being issued, thereby saving some time and expense for the extra effort. It is probably unfair to any expertizer to ask for the extra study and time after serious faults are evident to the expertizer. One caution - some expertizing services have on occasion issued a statement listing only the first big problem they see, and stopping there without mentioning perhaps other major problems like “not correct issue.” To improve communication, it is really helpful if you are able to have even the briefest dialogue with the expertizer.

Two certificates are shown below, and both are not for the best of items. They are both from people with great familiarity with this specific issue, which I feel is always very important. The single stamp has a removed cancel, which is a real detraction for an otherwise oversized example. The other is only a piece from a postal stationery lettersheet. However, both are now identified to color, give information a collector might not otherwise be certain about, and with the certificate the certainty of their status probably has at least increased their value by the cost of the certification. Ideally, a certificate should increase an item’s value by more than the expertizing cost. For items like the oval issues, a certificate may be completely necessary to determine what the item and its condition really is – and to confirm, if possible, that it is without faults. This is both for the current owner and for any future buyer.

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Expert, authorized by
PHILATELIC FEDERATION OF FINLAND

HERBERT OESCH

Finland 1856

EXPERTIZING
CERTIFICATE

No. 2323/00

26.12.00

Description: 5 Kop. blue, large pearls, ordinary paper.

Pen cancellation (taken out).

Result: Genuine, large margins.

Condition: Good (a vertical fold on left). No repairs to notice.



Herbert Oesch

Figure 62
Recent Finnish Certificate issued by Herbert Oesch

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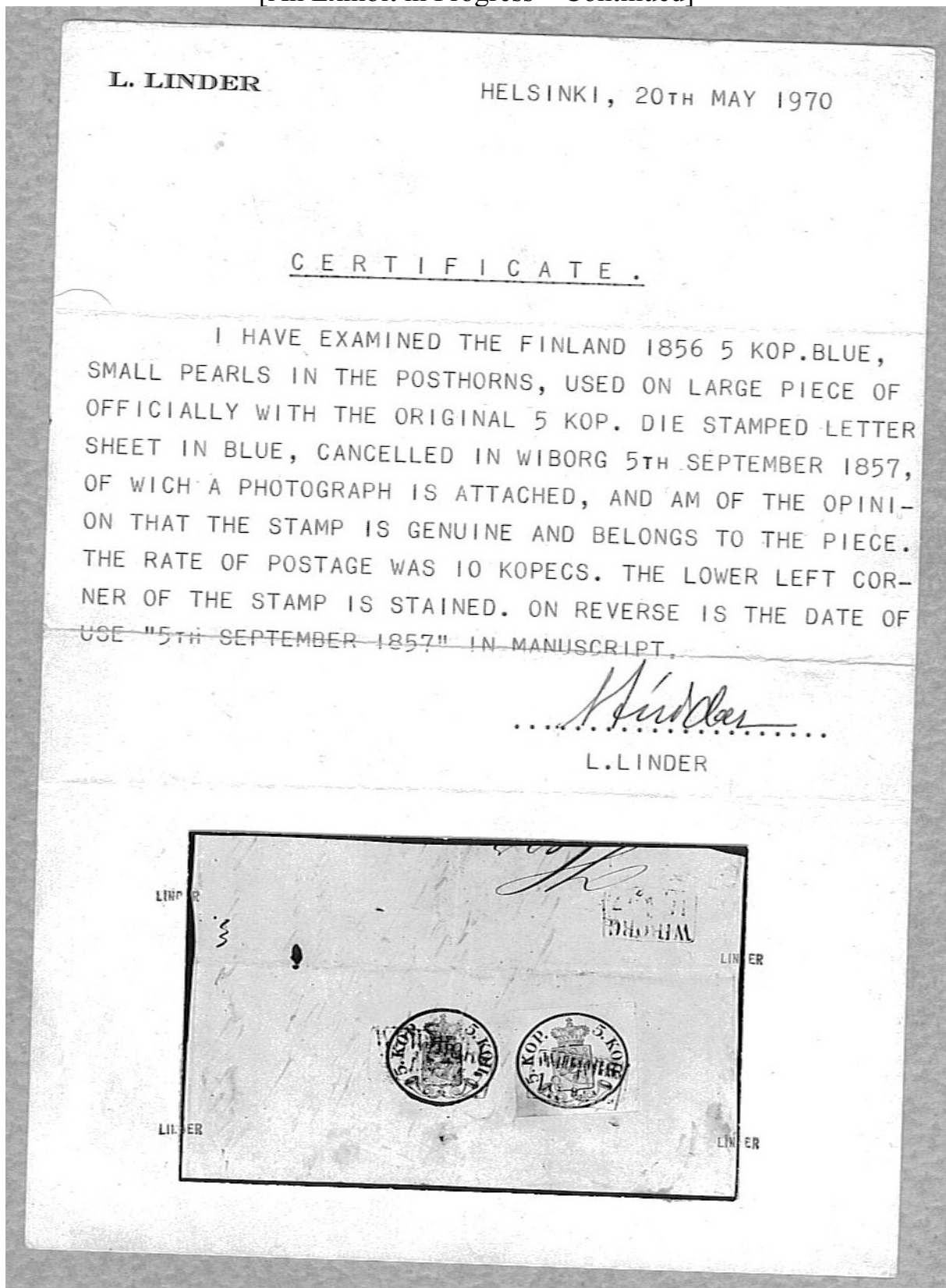


Figure 63
Photo Certificate issued by Leo Linder in 1970 for stamp shown in Figure 53

Fournier's Philatelic Clinic

And there are other problems. Repairs are another form of fakery, and are a real risk to collecting. Here is an ad from about a century ago that suggests how widespread this problem can be. This is Figure 64 below:



I beg to inform my many customers that I have opened a new branch of my business in fac-similes of stamps «out of use», I have instituted a

Philatelic Clinic

for the repair of defective stamps, i. e. torn, stained, punctured stamps, or stamps with deficient margin or perforation. I have therefore acquired the services of first-class specialists in this line who will be exclusively engaged in this branch.

When leaving my Clinic, the most defective stamp becomes irreproachable, at least very acceptable considering the degree of age at which it has been sent to me. In every case, it can be put in any album amongst the most choice stamps.

On the other hand, it is generally impossible to recognise, even with a lens, the smallest sign of repair, either on the surface, or in transparency. Besides, the fixing points and the colours are unalterable and insoluble in water, a result which has never been obtained up to now.

In order to test the superiority of my process, I beg to ask you to send me a fine stamp to repair, and I shall return it to you transformed quite out of recognition. If my work does not give you complete satisfaction, I agree to retouch free of charge the repaired stamps which do not please you. Try, and I am sure that you will be pleased and surprised, and will then send me many other orders.

F. FOURNIER.

1. The price of repairs is fr. 1.50 for stamps quoted fr. 20.— and under, following Yvert et Tellier's or Stanley or Senf Catalogue, and 10 % of their value, according to the same catalogue for those quoted over fr. 20.—, all sums to be paid when stamps are returned to the customer. No reduction on the above prices is granted, for any quantity of stamps sent for repairing.

2. Repairs are carried out in the shortest possible time, and in order of receipt.

3. The cost of repairs is always payable cash on delivery. No instalments or credit are allowed.

4. Except in case of previous agreement, all stamps are returned on payment, postage a part under reserve of free retouching the stamps which give rise to objections from the customer. These must be returned by the customer 48 hours at latest after receipt.

5. We are not responsible for any errors which may be caused by counterfeit stamps being repaired by us in good faith.

6. The Fournier's Clinic makes all repairs, cleaning and improvement if considered necessary and useful to give the stamps the greatest value, according to their original condition.

7. If not otherwise desired, « hors d'usage (useless) » stamps cancelled in ink are returned cleaned and gummed.

8. The firm cannot guarantee perfect work in the case of 2^d, 3^d approval stamps with such defects as thick stamping, faded or altered colours, brunt or greasy paper, etc., as to render perfect repair impossible. These stamps are sent back in the best possible state and must be considered as 2^d and not 1st class stamps.

9. The gum and colours employed for this work are insoluble but cannot resist hot water, benzine, alcohol, etc. until at least a fortnight after delivery.

10. The firm is not responsible for the disappearance of expert's seals when it is impossible to carry out the repairs without taking them away.

In no case are expert's seals taken away in course of repairs imitated or replaced by the firm.

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The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries - Fournier's Philatelic Clinic: continued -

IMPORTANT!

F. FOURNIER is the only firm which has reached perfection in the reproduction of old and obsolete postage stamps for collecting purposes. These first are imitations (particularly N° 1-303 in this present list) are made by an entirely new and up to date process. The finish and execution of the figures, inscriptions, surcharges, colours and paper, as well as the cancellations on them are mathematically true and correct.



Their exact likeness to the real and genuine stamp causes them to be «unequaled», and they have nothing whatever in common with other cheap productions of inferior quality and finish so frequently found: they are furthermore cancelled with stamp and date as used at the time the original stamp was in circulation. Six crosses of merit, insignia of honour 8 gold medals, 4 grand prizes and 6 diplomas of honour have been awarded the firm at the International Exhibitions of St-Etienne 1895, Nice 1896; Marseille 1896 and 1897; Toulon 1897 and Lyon 1898, etc. Trade Mark has been deposited at the Federal Office for Intellectual Property at Berne under N° 16062.



CONDITIONS

All prices in this list are in french currency, francs and centimes. Orders will be filled only when accompanied by cash, cheque or Money-Order.

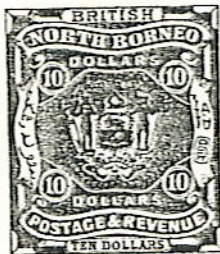


Postage stamps are accepted in payment with 5 % reduct. All orders amounting to Fr. 33.40 brut (i. e. Fr. 25.— net) and upwards are forwarded free per registered post; for any orders under Fr. 25.— net, Fr. 33.40 brut, add an additional 50 centimes for postage.

A 25 % discount will be allowed on any order amounting to Fr. 33.40 brut, i. e. Fr. 25.— net. Under Fr. 25.— net, the prices of this Price list are strictly net. When ordering, it suffices to state the « edition » and N° of this Catalogue corresponding to the sort wanted in adding some supplementary numbers in substitution of those which could be missing at the call's time. Free samples are not forwarded.

Correspondence : french, english, german, spanish, italian, and portuguese.

APPROVAL SHEETS



Sheets at approval are confided only when at least Fr. 25.— worth are taken at a time. All sheets on approval must be returned « per sealed and registered letter » not later than 8 days after receipt and at buyer's risk.

When less than Fr. 25.— worth is kept, the postage for sending and returning will be paid by the purchaser and all facsimiles sent out on approval remain our property until fully paid for.

PHILATELIC CLINIC

Repairing of defective Stamps either torn, soiled or bleached punched with holes, badly margined or perforated.

The colours are not dissolving and are unchangeable in Water, excepting in special cases (see conditions page n° 35).

NOTICE. — We especially recommend to those of our customers who buy defective stamps, not to pay for them more than an average of 10 % of their catalogued price.

It is at this price that we estimate and buy them according to our requirements.

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Figure 65

Fournier's Advertising Brochure — page 2

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The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries

- In Summary, Pictures of Some of the Little Design Details –



Figure 66

The 1850 design of the 5 kop – no “secret marks”



Figure 67

The 1856 design of the 5 kop with 3 “secret marks”

Two small pearls in the posthorns, and a rhomboid above the shield, but under the crown.



Figure 68

The 1858 change to the 5 kop cliché – making 2 of the “secret marks” larger. The result was to now have two significantly larger pearls in the posthorns, but with the same rhomboid under the crown. I don’t know a reason for changing the 5 kop pearl size, but leaving the 10 kop cliché with the same small pearl size.

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The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries [An Exhibit in Progress – Continued]

- In Summary, Pictures of Some of the Little Design Details (Continued) –

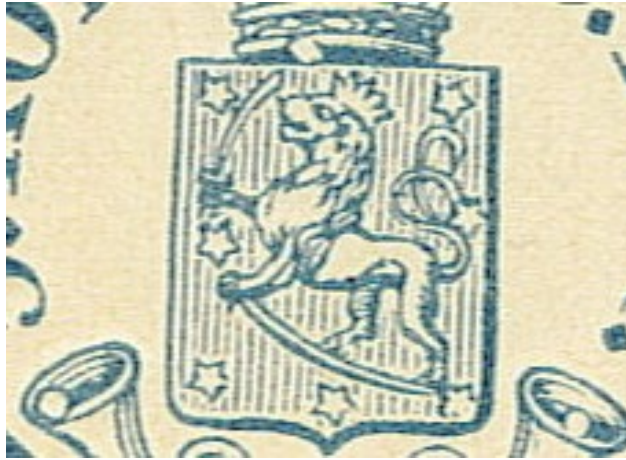


Figure 69

The 1858 change continues in the 5 kop reprints.
The same two large pearls in the posthorns and the same rhomboid under the crown.



Figure 70

The 1850 design of the 10 kop with no “secret marks”



Figure 71

The 1856 design of the 10 kop adds the 3 secret marks. All are “pearls” that are about the same size.

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The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries [An Exhibit in Progress – Continued]

- In Summary, Pictures of Some of the Little Design Details (Continued) –



Figure 72

The 1856 design of the 10 kop with the 3 pearl “secret marks” continues in the reprints – one in each posthorn and one under the crown. However, in 1862 a little dent near the center of the left shield frameline appears just to the left and in line with the top of the star and just below the lion’s paw holding the raised sword. The guess is that the dent apparently was caused by an accident in handling the 10 kop cliché.



Figure 73

The little dent near the center of the shield’s vertical left outer frameline appears during the printings of the 1862 Reprints. This interesting constant flaw was pointed out by Heikki Reinikainen in Finland. I have not noticed it mentioned in any of the literature available in English.



Figure 74

Two 5 kop reprints from the right end of the strip in Figure 19, and a 10 kop reprint from Figure 35, to show the dots added within the cross. An extra photo of the right end 5 kop is shown with the dot circled. The adjacent stamp to its left does not show a separate dot at all - compare the detail and completeness of the “white” cross inside that blue ink frame. This poses a problem! Generally, 10 kop reprint dots are distinct.

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The Oval Issues & The Problem of Forgeries [An Exhibit in Progress – Continued]

Questions and Comments

There is surely additional detail that would be interesting information to add about items in this exhibit, so if you can add some additional background, please contact the webmaster. Also, additional interesting items to show and describe would always be appreciated. Let us also hear if you have any questions, suggestions, or comments.

Ed Fraser, 195 Marine Street, Farmingdale, NY 11735, and the e-mail address: efraser@msn.com

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Rolf Gummesson, Mikko Ossa, & Karl-Erik Stenberg ”Suomen Vanhimmat Paikkakuntaleimat – The Early Postmarks of Finland – Die frühen Ortsstempel Finnlands” c. 1974 Lauri Peltonen, 142 pages, in Finnish, German, and English – available in hardcover or paperback.

Leo Linder “Finlands Ovalmärken” c. 1956 Post- och Telegrafstyrelsen, 160 pages. [Originally issued with the 1956 reprints of a 5 and 10 kop, mounted unhinged on page 145. Expect reprints have been removed.]

Mikko Ossa “Suomen Postimerkkien Väärenteitä – Forgeries of Finnish Postage Stamps” 1977 – In 2 languages, Finnish and English [translated by Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hvidonov]-Publ. Lauri Peltonen Ky, 107 pages – available hardbound and paperback. Illustrated with many items from the Gummesson forgery collection.

Suomen Postimerkkien Käsikirja – Volume I – c. 1967 Suomen Filatelistiliitto ry, 136 pages – In Finnish - available in hardcover or paperback. Apparently the oval issue sections have not been translated.

Suomen Postimerkkien Käsikirja – Volume V – c. 1970 Suomen Filatelistiliitto ry, 152 pages – In Finnish - available in hardcover or paperback. The section on Finnish postal stationery begins on page 56. Apparently the oval issue sections have not been translated.