

The Athens issue 1876-1877 of 30L

The Paris issue of the 30 and 60 Lepta stamps was succeeded by an issue printed in Athens between 1876 and 1877.

Once the plates and the 500 sheets of stamps of each value had been delivered to Athens, soon after the printing of this value started to be printed in Athens Royal Print-house.

The printings may have started taking place a little before the issuing of the 20 lepta of the period 1875-1880 (Hellas 51a with earlier date ?.6.76 and Hellas 51b with earlier date 25.8.76) or in between these two printings. Most possible is that the first printing was made just after the printing of the first 20 lepta stamps of this period.

The unsuccessful printing and the usage of the cream or yellowish paper of inferior quality characterize the stamps of this issue. The printing of the majority of the stamps is heavy and lacks skill, but there are some copies that really stand out as being of very good quality.



The earlier known date of circulation (8 AUG 76) which was first announced by Kohl (Argyropoulos) and was adopted by Konstantinidis and others is nowadays rejected by some copies in my collection. The new earlier days of circulation are 8 JUL 76 for the olive-brown shade and 19 JUL 76 for the red-brown shade.

The 30 Lepta stamps were printed on cream (off-white) to yellowish white of peculiar in thickness paper. The thickness of it varies from very thin and transparent yellowish paper, cream-white porous paper and paper of medium thickness to thick porous paper.

The gum on them is either light off-yellowish and thin or thick and fragile.

Many plate flaws appear even from the Paris print and continue during the Athenian printings with some more to be added through their printings.

Literature:

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First day of Circulation

For more than a century the first day of circulation was considered the 31 JUL (18)76. After my research the first day of circulation nowadays is the 8 JULY (18)76 and the cancellation is from SYRA island.



Main characteristics of the issue

- The "soft method" used instead the usual "hard method" used in Paris printings,



- due to the method used there are Fine to Artistic results, but also heavy and over-inked copies at the same time, with very bad and ugly results,



- there are colour dots all around the stamp, even on the cheek of Hermes and folded paper used in many cases,



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- another result of the bad use of the printing methods is the existence of quadrille background.



- another feature of these stamps is that we may see either shorter or longer cheek shadow lines. The ultramarine copy is an extremity in this case.



mirroring prints on the back of the stamp



the similarity of the digits to those of the French Ceres stamps



double printings due to sliding of the sheet over the plate



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random printing mistakes



Broken upper
right spandrel

Broken upper
left outer
frame-line

Scratch on the
upper
description

White line
between ΕΛΛ and
ΓΡΑΜΜ

random printing mistakes

white line running through several stamps, horizontally or vertically



Colours spots and stains all over the stamps



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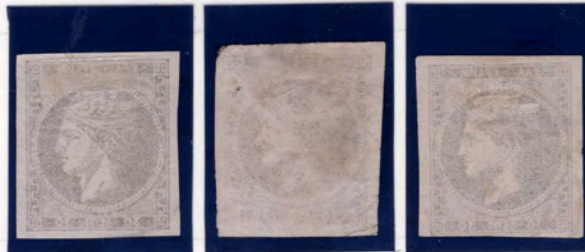
Paper of the issue

Four different qualities of paper are used

- a. Very thin and quite transparent yellowish paper



- b. Very thin whitish and meshed



quite transparent and usually

- c. Medium in thickness paper



- d. Thick porous paper to almost carton paper



Samples of gum used

- a. light off-yellowish and thin



- b. thick and fragile



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Border frame-line

The border frame-line were previously known as "Gianniotis lines"



Private perforations 11 ¼ and 11 ⅓



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The colour shades of the stamps

a. Olive brown



b. Brown (in different shades)



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The colour shades of the stamps

c. On Yelowish paper



d. Sepia



ε. Red-brown (in different shades)



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The Plate Flaws of the issue

LEFT PLATE

Position 25L – “a short line under the curve of ‘P’ of ‘ΓPAMM’”



Position 53L – “deformed lower right floret”



Position 138L – “white line which connects the ‘E’ of ‘ΕΛΛ’ with the frame above it”



RIGHT PLATE (i)

Position 15R – “white spot on the upper left antenna of the first ‘M’ of ‘ΓPAMM’”



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RIGHT PLATE (ii)

The Plate Flaws of the issue

Position 16R – “white line which connects the mouth of Hermes with the Greek key opposite of it”



A strip of 5 from the ex MAXIMUS collection showing the positions 15R-16R (positions 12-16)



Position 66R – “white spot on the lower left quarter of the circle”



Position 70R – “rounded lower right corner of the outer frame-line”



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The Plate Flaws of the issue

RIGHT PLATE (ii)

Position 71R – “broken lower horizontal frame-line next to the left corner”



Position 79R – “white dot on the opening below the letter ‘Λ’ of ‘ΑΕΠΤ’ on the lower description”



Position 107R – “short white line which connects the upper right pedal of the lower left to the frame-line above it”



OTHER POTENTIAL PLATE FLAWS TO BE CHECKED

“Broken upper inner frame-line just below first ‘Λ’ of the word ‘ΕΛΛ’”



“Broken lower inner frameline of the lower inscription and left spandrel”



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Handstamps which occur on 30 Lepta stamps



ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ
20 SEPT 81
(163)



ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ
(ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)



ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ
(ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)



ΣΜΥΡΝΑ
(ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)



ΒΩΛΟΣ
(ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)



ΒΩΛΟΣ
(ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)

[blue handstamp] [black handstamp]



ΣΥΡΑ (67)

with handwritten
secondary cancellation

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FORGERIES of Athenian 30 Lepta stamps

According to Feenstra, VLastos and B. Ure from very early the forgers started working on forging these stamps. Not all forged stamps were satisfying, but during the next period succeeded good results.

Alisafi forgeries type "B"



Always appear 4 different types of forgeries as shown above in block of 4, with the same characteristics. The stamps below are from the cliché B3-B4.



The other case is the case of Fournier who also uses the same characteristics in his forgeries. The most common is the shading lines which are not continuous and the wavy lines in the spandrels are always meshed.



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Cover from LARISSA 18.12.1881 (handstamp with extinct (TURKIE)) to Constantinople 6.1.1882, through Athens 9.12.1881. Housein Effendi to whom the cover refers, was a Higher judicial official of the Ottoman Porte, responsible for Thessaly where Larissa is.



EL from Piraeus 29.4.1881 to Constantinople 4.5.1881. The Marine Bank "Ο Αρχάγγελος" (the Archangel) was established with a Royal Decree in 1870. It operated mostly as an Insurance Company. The receiver of this letter was one of the Higher officers in the Istanbul branch.

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A cover from Athens 27.12.1877 to the island of Chios through Syra 28.12.1877. The handstamp of the PO in Chios is just seen.



A commercial EL from Constantinople [ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝ (ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)] 24.09.1880 to Piraeus 26.09.1881

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Fragment of a commercial EL from Thessaloniki [ΘΕΣΣΑΛΟΝΙΚΗ (ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ)] 24.06.1878 to Argos, through Athens
26.06.1878



A commercial cover from Alexandretta (ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΕΙΑ (97)) 9.5.1882 type IIb to Piraeus 12.5.1881.