

# The Argentina 1935-51 Definitives

## Notes

### “Servicio Oficial”

3

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## **Preface**

In this book I accumulate my notes on the “Servicio Oficial” official issues during March 2009. 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.

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

*The Argentina 1935-51 Definitives*



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



*The Argentina 1935-51 Definitives*



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 128 departmental official major issues, shown as gray boxes in the table below. 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.

Value	Paper	M.A.	M.G.	M.H.	M.I.	M.J.I.	M.M.	M.O.P.	M.R.C.
1c	1E1								
2c	1E1								
3cGr	1E1								
5c	1E1								
5ct	1E1								
10cR-I	1E1								
10cR-II	1E1								
15cSC	1E1								
20cJMG	1E1								
20cMG	1E1								
30c	1E1								
50c	1E1								
1P top	1E1								
1P bottom	1E1								
1PL	1E1								
25c	1E2								
30c	1E2								
1P bottom	1E2								



***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 this 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:

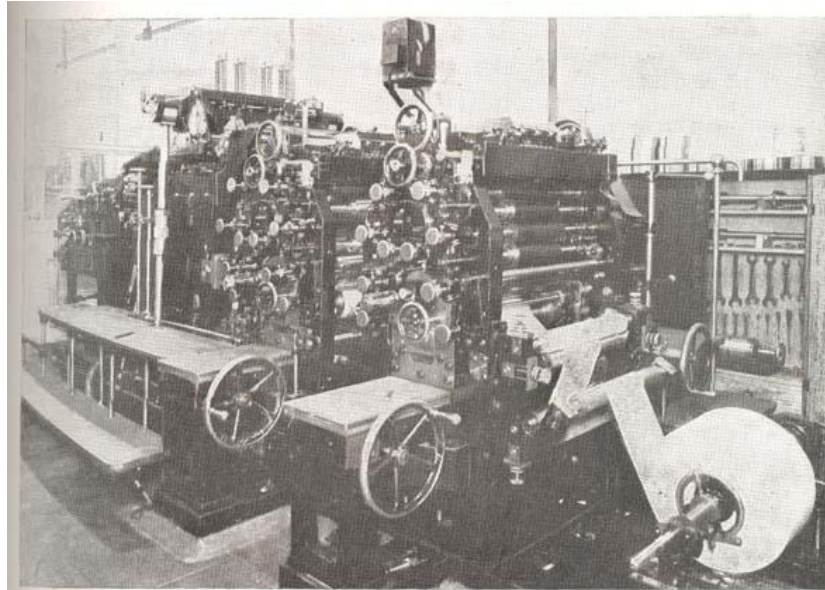
1. Decides to issue on October 1, 1935 the 1/2c, 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 6c, 10c, 12c, y 20c (full name version: JMG) values.
2. Demonetizes from January 1, 1936 onwards the previous (San Martin) issue.
3. Allows the exchange of San Martin stamps for the new stamps during the first 90 days of 1936.

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.



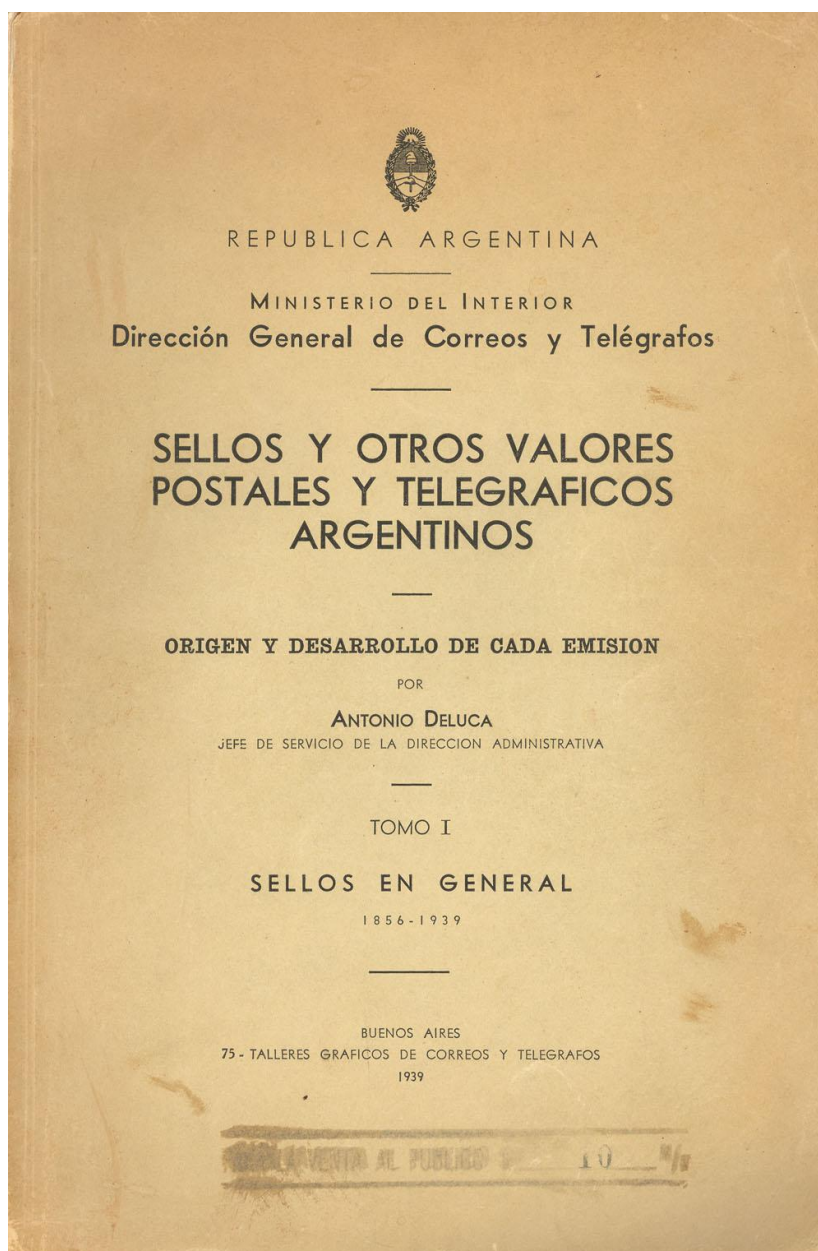
Rotativa "Goebel" tipográfica a dos colores modelo B.R.M. utilizada por la Casa de Moneda para la impresión de sellos postales. Fué adquirida en 1935, si bien se instaló en los talleres de la institución desde noviembre de 1930 a título de ensayo.

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")."



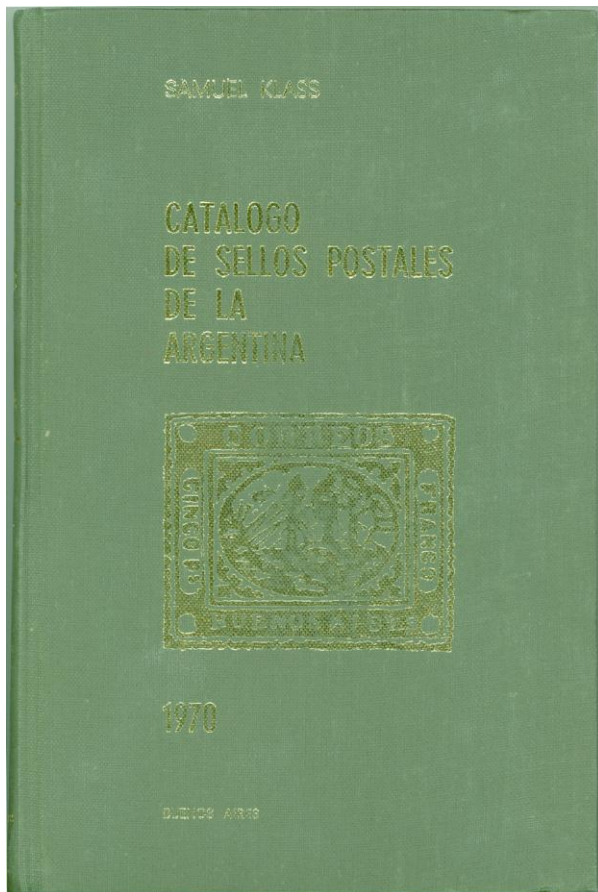
## Catalogs and other References

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.

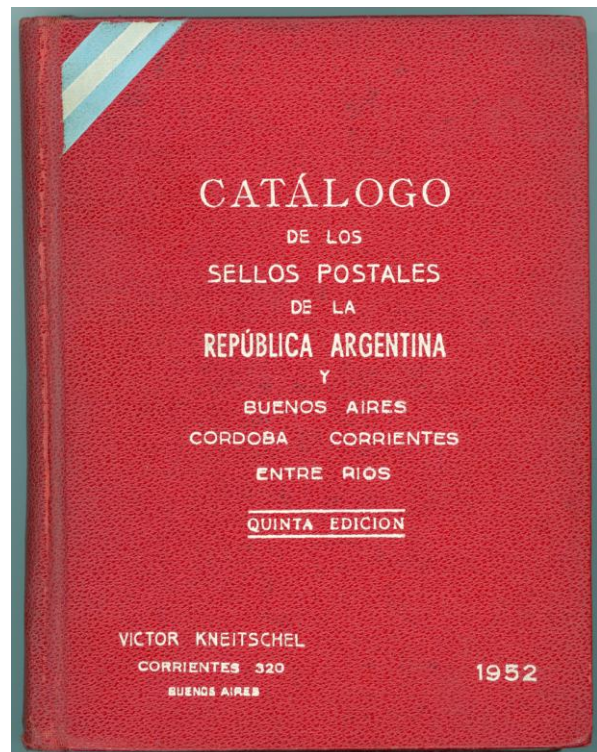


The specialized catalog written by Samuel Klass is my most important secondary source for the regular issues. It contains the most complete reference to all sorts of varieties and a few earliest use mentions. Klass has a summarized listing of the Arg3551 officials. The catalog that is most often quoted 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 1Es), 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-Teggia) 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-Teggia, 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.



Wednesday, March 4, 2009

## **1E1 'Servicio Oficial'**

The stamps issued on this paper with the 'Servicio Oficial' overprint are all small format:

1. 3c San Martin Green



2. 5c Moreno typographed



3. 10c Rivadavia Red Type II



4. 15c Small Format Cattle Dark Blue



Wednesday, March 4, 2009

## **1E2 'Servicio Oficial'**

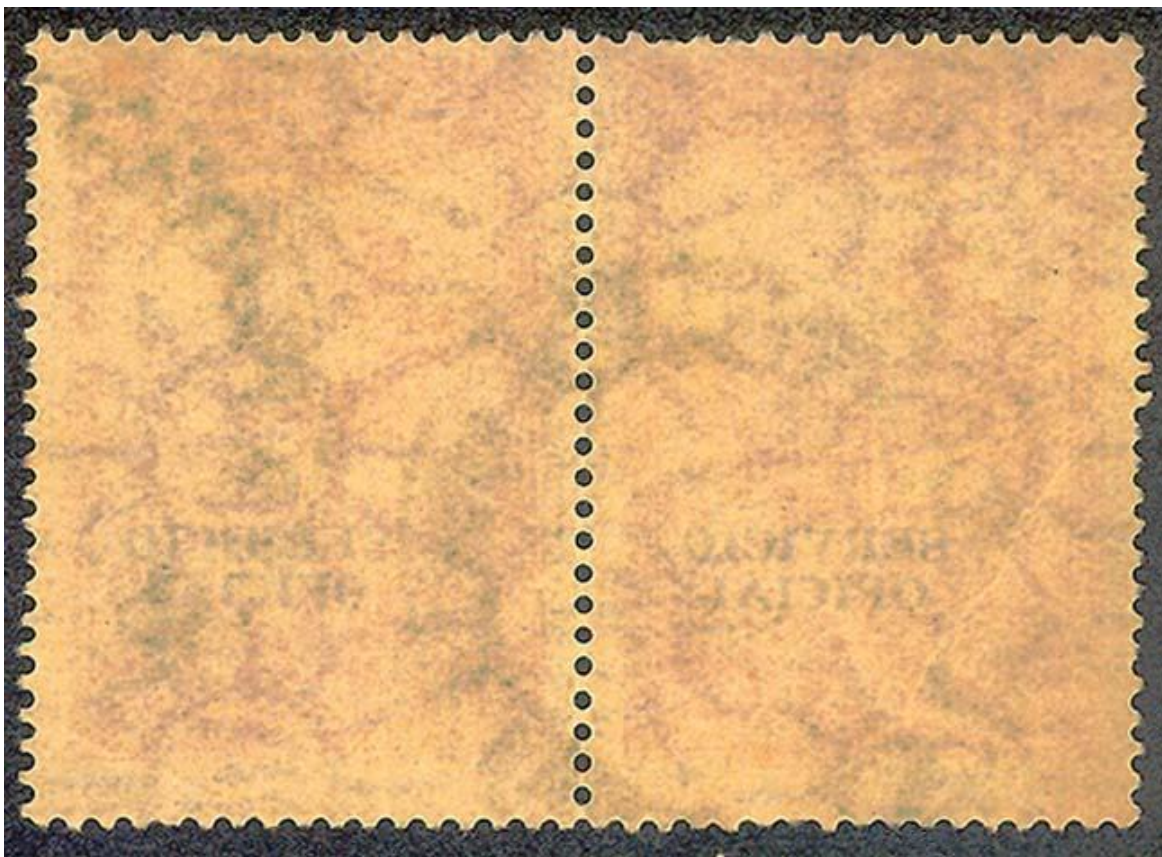
The stamps issued on this paper with the 'Servicio Oficial' overprint are all large format:

Here are two used specimens. I find these stamps used between 1938 and 1943. These stamps were used infrequently over a long period of time. This usage is in contrast to the regular issue 1E2 stamp, which was exhausted quickly in 1937.





Here is the back of a pair of the 25c.



Here is a mint block of the 50c1E2-SO. This stamp is very rare used.







Here is a single of the 1p1E2-SO, a rare stamp mint or used.





Saturday, March 28, 2009

### **The NGR 5c Moreno 'Servicio Oficial'**

This stamp saw very little postal use. Most of the specimens I have are mint. Here is a selection.

A cleanly printed specimen.





A discolored paper specimen, typical of this printing.



A second discolored paper specimen, with the elongated L of 'Oficial' variety.





Saturday, March 28, 2009

### **The 2D 5c 'Servicio Oficial'**

This stamp, like the 25c clay paper 'Servicio Oficial' was not issued as a regular stamp. Most specimens look as though they were printed using a dirty plate. This printing is less common than the 1E4, and more common than the other printings.







Next is a less common clean plate stamp showing a variety to the L of 'Oficial.'



Saturday, March 28, 2009

### **The 1E4 5c Moreno 'Servicio Oficial'**

This printing is the most common one of the five 'Servicio Oficial' issues of this stamp. The 1E4 paper is cloth-like and white. These stamps have small perforations.



This next specimen, which resembles the discolored NGR printing, has a deformed O of 'SERVICIO.'





This reddish brown specimen has a second shadow overprint.



Here is a dated specimen from 1944.





I am not familiar with the use of this marking.



Saturday, March 28, 2009

## **The 5c1E1t-SO and the 5c1E3-SO**

The first 5c Moreno with 'Servicio Oficial' overprint dates from 1938 and is found on the 1E1 typographed stamp, somewhat common as a regular stamp yet surprisingly uncommon as an used official stamp.





Here is statement dated in 1938.



This printing is from a very dirty plate.



The second 'Servicio Oficial' issue is in offset on the 1E3 paper.



This specific stamp has a small break in one of the lines in the background of the bust, and a scratch to the plate outside of the stamp design.





Friday, March 27, 2009

### **The 15c 1E3/1E4 Small Format Cattle 'Servicio Oficial'**

This printing is approximately 10 times less common than the 1E4 printing. The color is slightly crisper.



Here is a detail of the watermark.





The 1E3 was in used in 1943 and 1944.



This 15c 1E4 Small Format Cattle 'Servicio Oficial' shows a scratch to the plate outside the stamp design.



This 1E4 stamp has a small L of 'OFICIAL'





Here are a few postmarked specimens of the 1E4. This printing was in use in 1943 and 44.







Friday, March 27, 2009

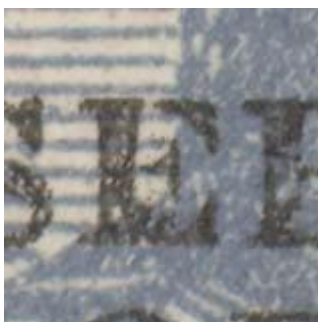
### **The 2D/2C 15c Guemes 'Servicio Oficial'**

Up to before looking through this batch of stamps, I had not come across a diffused Straight Rays printing of this stamp. Here it is, the 15cMG2D-SO, a rare stamp.





The overprint has a peculiar letter.



Here are examples of the watermark.





Here is the much more common clear Straight Rays printing, the 15cMG2C-SO, with examples of the watermark.







Friday, March 27, 2009

### **The Wavy Rays 15c Guemes 'Servicio Oficial'**

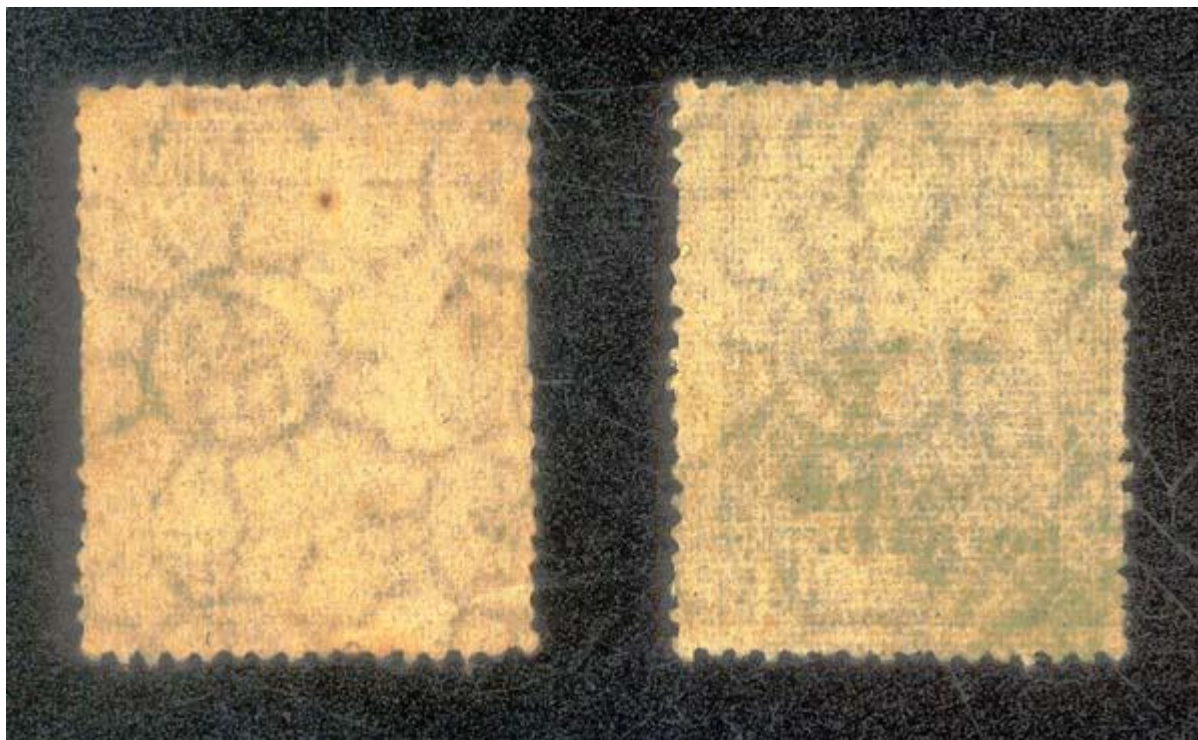
The 15cMG1-SO with Wavy Rays watermark, although uncommon, is not nearly as rare as the regular issue. The stamp was used in the early 1950s and continues to puzzle me. It has a watermark consistent with the 1E3 or 1L1 grids. I am still not sure which of the two is correct. For now, I will classify it as a 1L based on the years it was in use. These two specimens show weak and strong overprints.







These two papers look slightly different. This post is a place holder for future work.



Friday, March 27, 2009

## **NGR and NOP 'cents' 'Servicio Oficial'**

The 2c NGR





The 3c Mariano NOP



The 15c Martin Guemes NGR



Friday, March 27, 2009

### **The 'cents' 1E3 and 1E4 'Servicio Oficial'**

This sample is from a batch I have just received. Here are the 1c, 2c, and 3c Gray 1E3 issues.



The 2c has poor color control, atypical for such an infrequently used stamp.





Here is the watermark.



*The Argentina 1935-51 Definitives*

These two 2c used specimens show additional color variations.



This strip may be 1E4, but I am not sure of it.





These 3cSMGy1E3-SO shows variations in the overprint.







Here is a 3cSMGy1E4-SO



Friday, March 27, 2009

### **The 20c Small Format Cattle 'Servicio Oficial'**

These two printings are on the 1L1 paper. The light blue printing, shown below, is approximately 10 times less common than the dark blue printing.



Here are two shades of the dark blue printing.







This strip shows small variation in the relative placement of the two rows of the overprint.



Wednesday, March 25, 2009

## **The clay printing of the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

To date I have classified this stamp as a CL2B, but upon closer inspection, I find that this is a different clay paper from 1955. I am calling this stamp the 25cCL3-SO from here onwards. This stamp was not issued as a regular printing. If you come across one without the overprint it is a proof or a very rare missing overprint example.





This strip of the 25cCL3-SO has variations of the overprint and an unverified plate variety.







Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **Less common issues of the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

The 1E3 and 1E4 printings are the most common. Here are the others.

1E2, reasonably uncommon but not as rare as the 50c1E2-SO.



NGR, reasonably uncommon but not as rare as the 50cNGR-SO. Here are two shades.







NOP, just as rare as the 50cNOP-SO.



1L 'dark'





Here is the watermark. This stamp is a 1L2. There is a second 1L printing with a very light pink color that is rare. I did not find any in the large sample I am using here that I recently acquired.



Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **Vanishing sun on the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

I have shown these before for the regular issue. This variety is found on one of the 1E3 printings. Here are two specimens showing a vanishing sun. It seems that when the variety was listed as 'missing sun' high magnification and digital filtering were not available. Once these two techniques are used, it is clear that there are a few dots for the rays of the sun that are visible.







Here is a second specimen.





Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **The 1E4 printings of the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

I find these in a narrower range of shades than the range for the 1E3. This range of printings is two to four times LESS common than the 1E3 range of printings.

Light pink.





Medium pink.



Slightly darker pink.



Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **The 1E3 printings of the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

The wide range of 1E3 colors of the 25c 'Servicio Oficial' is the same as that I have already shown for the regular issue. Some 1E3s have lighter colors...





And a small number have dark colors.





There are also a few specimens that show a pink shadow on the back of the stamp.







Here is a 1E3 that seems to have printed over a particle of dirt.



Wednesday, March 25, 2009

## **Watermark curiosities on the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

I find some stamps with a very porous paper with the same watermark grid as the 1E3. Here is an example.



I also find a 1E3 specimen with an oval surrounding the RA instead of a circle.





Wednesday, March 25, 2009

## Impossible dates on the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'

September 11, 1912 (I guess the correct year is 1942, since this is a 1E4 specimen).



Unreadable day in February 1934 (I guess the correct year is 1944, since this is a 1E3 specimen).



Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **The 1E1 issue of the 25c 'Servicio Oficial'**

This stamp is consistent with the clear impression of the 1E1 printing and the 1E1 watermark, with a notable exception: these stamps were used in 1939 and 1940 and the paper is bright white. The 1E1 paper is cream. My educated guess is that a different pulp was used.



Here is a scan of the watermark.





Here is a specimen postmarked in May 1939.



This specimen has gaps in the overprint.





This specimen has the 2 of 25 deformed. To date, I have not confirmed this flaw as a repeatable plate variety.





Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **Later issues of the 50c 'Servicio Oficial'**

The 12 mm (wider) overprint was last used between 1945 and 1948 on the two unwatermarked papers. Both are rare as officials, and very scarce used.

NGR



NOP



The later issues have the 11 mm (narrower) overprint.

1L1 'deep orange'





1L1, with master plate variety 'clipped upper outer left corner.'



2C, so-called Straight Rays watermark, with usual bright colors.



Clay paper from 1952, CL2B.





Zarate paper from 1955, 1L5.



Wednesday, March 25, 2009

## **Several master die plate varieties of the 50c**

Several master die plate varieties of the 50c

I use several 50c-SO stamps for this comparison. These stamps were printed in 1952 on what I think is the second plate. The 1L2 is one of the most common printings-on the regular as well as the 'Servicio Oficial' printings. The master plate varieties are:

1. Clipped V of CENTAVOS.
2. Dot after MAR.
3. Clipped outer line upper left corner.

Here is a pair with the right stamp showing the 'dot after MAR' plate variety.



Here is a detail of this master die variety.



Here is a pair with the left stamp showing the 'dot after MAR' plate variety and the right stamp showing the 'clipped outer line upper left corner' plate variety.





Here is a detail of these master die varieties.



This block has the same plate varieties, but the 'dot after MAR' has a major break to the left outer bar.



Here is a detail of the left outer bar.





Wednesday, March 25, 2009

### **The 1E issues of the 50c 'Servicio Oficial'**

These stamps were seldom used. Most of the specimens I have come across are mint, and therefore are reminders since these stamps were not regularly collected or furnished by the post office mint outside the Argentinean government. I do not find any 1E1s, which is consistent with how seldom this value was used as an official, and also consistent with the extreme rarity of the 50c 'DEPOF' values, all 1E1.

1E2



Here is a 1E3 stamp. I show detail of the overprint. Although I find irregularities in these, I am not yet ready to establish these variations as repeatable varieties.





1E4



Here is a 1E4 pair with the left stamp showing a break in the right outer line.





Here is a 1E4 specimen with some additional ink to the overprint.



This 1E4 specimen shows the selvage.



The 1E4 specimens are more common than the 1E2 and 1E3 specimens combined.

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

### **The 40c 'Servicio Oficial'**

This stamp requires no introduction for those who collect it. It is very rare. It is printed the 1L6 paper, the bright white and very porous paper also found on the 2 pesos stamp from the 1950s.







Wednesday, March 18, 2009

### **Later papers of the 1P-SO**

The late papers show printings ending near 1950.

The second clay paper, from 1943, the CL1B.



The 1945-47 printings on the unwatermarked (NGR) paper, printed in four variants:

1. Upper Left, clear perforations/thin paper, 12 mm overprint.
2. Upper Right, missed perforations/medium to thick paper, 12 mm overprint.
3. Lower Left, clear perforations/thin paper, 11 mm overprint.
4. Lower Right, missed perforations/medium to thick paper, 11 mm overprint.







The final printing of the 1 peso 'Servicio Oficial' is on the second, clear so-called Straight Rays paper, the 2C. Here are back scans of the 1P2C-SO with vertical and horizontal watermark.







Tuesday, March 17, 2009

## **Early papers of the 1P1Ex-SO**

Here are additional examples of the three early papers for the 1P1Ex-SO.

Here is the 1E1, with a typically crisp impression.





The 1E2 stamp is very rare.



The 1E3 stamp shows some wear to the plates, especially the background.



Here are the watermarks side-by-side. From left to right: 1E1, 1E2, and 1E3.



The 1E4 is the most common of the four papers by a wide margin (my estimate is 10 to 1 where the 1 incorporates 1E1, 1E2, and 1E3 combined).





Tuesday, March 17, 2009

## **Two candidate plate varieties of the 2P1L-SO**

I do not find these repeated yet, and are therefore candidates pending verification.





Tuesday, March 17, 2009



## Major plate varieties of the 2P1L-SO

I have previously documented these plate varieties on the regular stamp.

Long scratch in the center.





Dot in center middle top.



Tuesday, March 17, 2009

### **A remarkable 2P1L-SO plate variety**

This plate variety is composed of several long scratches to the center design.









Tuesday, March 17, 2009

## **Two types of the 2P1L-SO**

The first type is a 1L paper similar in texture to the 1L1, but a separate paper, which I refer to for now as the 1L6.

This specimen shows slight doubling of the center, a somewhat common printing variety that could be attributed to at least two printing deviations:

1. Tumbling of the plate causing a shadow image as the center was printed.
2. True double printing when the first center image was deemed to be too light and was overprinted with a second, darker run.





Here are two scans of the watermark.







The second type is a 1L Zarate, the 1L5, which upon close examination looks to be a group of two or more papers of which their study I am postponing for later.

This remarkable specimen has the frame slightly double printed. The two possible reasons listed above apply to this stamp.







Here are the backs showing an almost completely illegible watermark.





Tuesday, March 17, 2009

## **Two minor plate varieties of the 2PNGR-SO**

I do not find these repeated yet, and are therefore candidates pending verification.







Tuesday, March 17, 2009

### **A variable plate variety on the 5 pesos 'Servicio Oficial'**

This plate variety of the 5PNGR-SO has a distinctive break to the horizontal line below the letters 'BLI' of 'REPUBLICA,' and may be from one of the cliché used to make the plate.

I find two types so far, one with small gap to the top outer line, and another with an additional top inner horizontal line break.







Tuesday, March 17, 2009

## **Two 5 pesos 'Servicio Oficial' plate varieties**

I have several used specimens of each of these varieties. All 5 pesos 'SO' stamps are NGR paper.

The first plate variety has a speck of grayish green background top right of the palm tree.



The second plate variety has a break in the outer line of the denomination box, and a frame scratch pointing out of the design bottom center.







Tuesday, March 17, 2009

## **'Servicio Oficial' High Values**

This selection shows a mint block of six of the 5 pesos and an used single of the 10 pesos. These stamps are considerably more common mint than used. The mint specimens are remainders since, according to Deluca, it was illegal to allow the mint stamps out of Argentinean government control. Luckily, these stamps are not valuable enough to get forgers interested in forging the postmark.

This block has an interesting plate variety.



The first stamp in the first row has a scratch in the field near the palm.



This used specimen is considerably scarcer than a mint specimen.





# **The Argentina 1935-51 Definitives**

## **Notes**

### **“Servicio Oficial”**



**3**