

The New Issues of 30 lepta Large Hermes Head of 1876 - 1882

Collection "HYDRAMA"

In 1875 Greece joined U.P.U. and the Greek government asked **Désiré-Albert Barre** to create stamps for the two new values of 30 and 60 lepta used for the mail, common or registered, abroad.

The Paris print, next to the creation of the new plates was printed in the printing house of **J. Claye & Cie**, rue Saint Benoit No. 7, Paris. Almost after the reception of the 500 sheets of each of the two values, a new printing was necessary, this time in Athens. These stamps were printed between 1876 and 1877 in the Royal Printing House.

In 1882 a third issue [2nd Athenian] of 30 lepta, not in brown colour, but following the change of colours requested by U.P.U., was implemented, specifically in ultramarine shades.

Frame	Pages	CONTENT
I	2-6	1876 Paris print
I-II	7 - 1	1st Athenian print 1876-1877
II	2 - 3	1st Athenian print 1876-1877
II	4 - 6	2nd Athenian print 1882
II	7-16	Plate flaws and Postal history



The first date of the **Paris 30 lepta** stamps is considered the 6th of May 1876. But the researchers considered that the **8th of May** is most possible. Nowadays a new date is considered the earliest. The earliest date of circulation of the 1st Athenian print is the 8th of July 1876 (olive-brown shade) and the 19th of July 1876 (red-brown shade).

The 2nd Athenian print of the ultramarine 30 lepta stamp first appeared after a Royal decree immediately after its issue, i.e., the first days of May 1882 until the end of the same year.

During the study of the stamps of the three issues in my collection I found several plate flaws.

Literature:

L. Fanchini, Tirages de Paris de la "grosse tête d'Hermès", Bulletin de l'Association Philatélique Sparnacienne, Société Philatélique fondée le 21 mai 1898, Bulletin n° 98 de juin 2009, p. 7-15.

Salonidis Theofilos, The Earlier Date of Cancellation of the Athenian 30 Lepta LHH, Philoteliki Lesvos, v.268 (Jan.-Mar. 2018), p. 14-16.

Salonidis Theofilos, The Athens 30 lepta of the 1876-1878 period, Philotelia, v.714-719, 2019.

Salonidis Theofilos, Corrections in plate flaws positions of the Athens 30 lepta, Philotelia, v.727, 2021

Salonidis Theofilos, A Quick View of the First Days of Circulation of the Blue 30 Lepta Stamps, Philoteliki Lesvos, v.268 (Jan.-Mar. 2018), p. 14-16.

Salonidis Theofilos, Plate flow in the Paris Print of the 30lepta of 1876, To Grammatosimo, 3rd Period, v.24 (May-Aug., 2020), p. 1-2

Salonidis Theofilos, The white line that intersects the head and the hat of Hermes, To Grammatosimo, 3rd Period, v.27, (May-Aug., 2021), p. 1-6

Information about the exhibit

1. Unique items are marked in **RED** and Rare items in **BLUE** frame accordingly.
2. In Plate flaws description the appearance in proof is mentioned with **(D)**, the Paris print with **(P)**, the 1st Athenian print with **(A)** and the 2nd Athenian print with **(B)**.
3. The plate flaws which are earlier found are mentioned with **(E)**, plate flaws which are corrected are mentioned with **(C)**, plate flaws earlier known without determined position **(R)**, and those found by the writer are mentioned with **(T)**.

The Paris issue of 1876 of the 30 lepta

There was a long delay finding and sending the die of the previous 1861 Hermes stamps. The Paris print was delivered to the Greek Government at the end of April of 1876. The 500 sheets of each value (30 and 60 lepta) were delivered were followed by the proofs and essays. Only two die proofs of black colour are known plus one in green colour on pelure paper. Of the colour and print essays there are three basic types, those of the double print, those on the yellowish paper which contain many mixings and on yellowish paper which are very close to the common stamps, which are described by Konstantinidis.



Konst. 56 ES.II 4



Konst. 56 ES.II.1



Konst. 56 ES.III.1

The characteristics of these new values are like those of the first edition of 1861. The result of this is the clear picture, broken shading lines on the chick, neck, and nape, in the fringe – line of the hat and the eye – brow. To achieve such results, the “hard method” was used.

A new characteristic of the new issue, which will be better described under the Athenian issues, is the bigger distance among the cliches and the stamps apparently which is 2.8 mm instead of 2 mm of the first issues.



The most specific difference is that the plates were made by Galvano and the plate is double, two plates of 150 cliches instead of one as previously. The way the make of the plate was manufactured prevented of the peculiar differences of the cliches, since the digits were put from the very beginning, so there is no contour.



A specific novelty are the value digits used for the 1871 – 1872 Ceres issue with the big digits, but the digits are about the $\frac{3}{4}$ of the French stamps.



scale ~X300%



The Paris issue of 1876 of the 30 lepta

In this first issue of the new values there are two distinguished colour shades as a result of the good quality of printing, paint, solvents and paper.

A. Yellow - brown



B. Deep olive - brown



E.L. from Argostolion [ΑΡΓΟΣΤΟΛΙΟΝ (ΚΕΦΑΛΛ.) (110) 23 IOYN 76], via Corfu [ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ (106) 24 IOYN 76] to Trieste [TRIESTE 9 7 76]

The Paris issue of 1876 of the 30 lepta

The first day of this issue was considered for a long period the May 8th, 1876. A mention of Kohl that exist at least a stamp with a date of May 6, 1876. Recently, I bought a stamp which bears the handstamp of Athens with the date **May 3, 1876**, a stamp that has been mentioned in an article by the collector and researcher M. Kaitatzidis.



3 MAY 76

Scarce envelope baring a Paris print 30 Lepta stamp which was sent during its first month of circulation.



Envelope from Athens [ΑΘΗΝΑΙ (1) 23 ΜΑΪΟΣ 76] via London [LONDON A PAID 10 JU 76] to New York, USA [NEW YORK 21 JUN 76]

The Paris issue of 1876 of the 30 lepta

30L. stamps with handstamps during the first month of circulation MAY 76.



9 MAY 76



12 MAY 76



13 MAY 76



15 MAY 76



16 MAY 76



18 MAY 76



21 MAY 76



22 MAY 76



23 MAY 76



25 MAY 76



27 MAY 76



28 MAY 76



29 MAY 76



31 MAY 76

The Paris issue of 1876 of the 30 lepta



EL from Patras [ΠΑΤΡΑΙ (9) 1 ΑΥΓ 76], via Corfu [ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ (106) 2 ΑΥΓ 76] to Trieste [TRIESTE 16 8 76]



EL from Ithaca [ΙΘΑΚΗ (109) 28 ΦΕΒΡ 77], via Corfu [ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ (106) 4 ΜΑΡΤ 77] to Trieste [TRIESTE 19 3 77]

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

Soon after the circulation of the Paris 30 lepta stamps, started the printing of the first Athenian 30 lepta stamps, caused by the large post need for the letters traveling abroad since the prices were stabilised.

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

First date of circulation

For longer than a century the 31 of July 1876 was considered as the first date of circulation. During my research and given the stamps in my collection the first date of circulation nowadays is considered the **8 JULY (18)76** for the olive-brown copies and the **19 JULY (18)76** for the red brown. They were cancelled in the SYROS island Post Office.



Main characteristics of the issue

- instead of using the “hard method” used in the Paris issue, the “soft method” was used for this issue with the use of a kind of pelt under the printing paper,



- Because of the method in use there are FINE to mediocre results at the same time,



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

- to really very bad results, with coarse to over-inked copies,



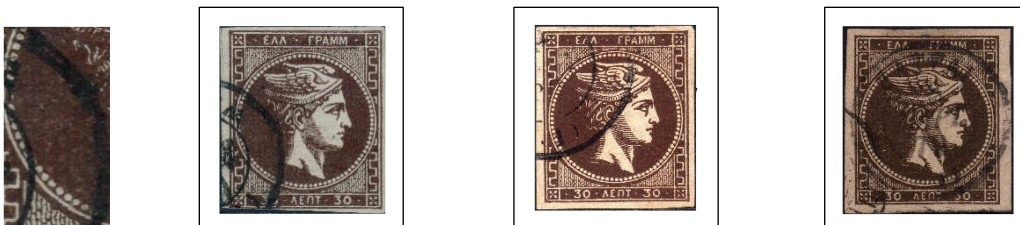
- there are colour dots all over the stamps, even on the cheek of Hermes, even on fine printed copies,



- while appears on intense folded paper which seem to be more often because of the bad quality of the paper,



- another often characteristic is the quadrille background, mainly on the side long positions, and caused using the pelt under the printing paper,



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

- another characteristic is the appearance of the shading lines which although normal to those of the other stamps are sometimes shorter,



Normal shading lines



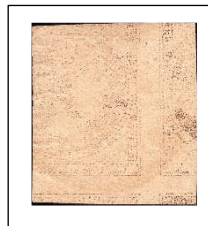
Short shading lines



- even to some extremities, with a shaven appearance (an ultramarine copy)



- Mirror printings on the observe side of the stamps



- double printings of different parts of the stamps, caused by the sliding of the paper on the plates



Upper right corner



Lower frame line



Upper right floret



Upper inscription and florets

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

- several random printing faults



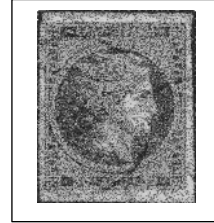
Broken upper right corner



Broken outer frame line on the left side

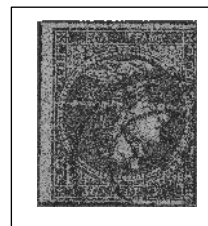


Random lines on the inscriptions



White line between ΕΛΛ and ΓΡΑΜΜ

- white line which crosses several stamps, even more than ten in a line. This is a random case in which some kind of twine was stuck on the plate causing this white line,



- and even vertical white lines which could be made by 'albino' printings



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

- there are several colour stains on the stamps



Big stain under the neck



'camel' colour stain in front of the nose



Aniline coloured stains on the nose



Big elongated light brown stain in front of the mouth



Yellow colour stain behind the head

- Finally, there are Private perforations $11 \frac{1}{4}$ and $11 \frac{3}{4}$



Perforation $11 \frac{1}{4}$



Perforation $11 \frac{3}{4}$

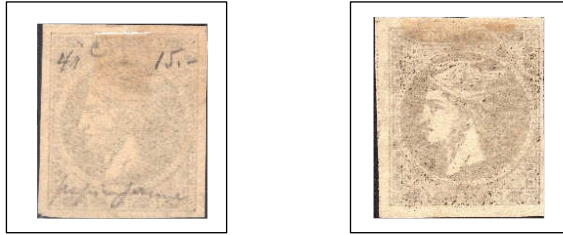
The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

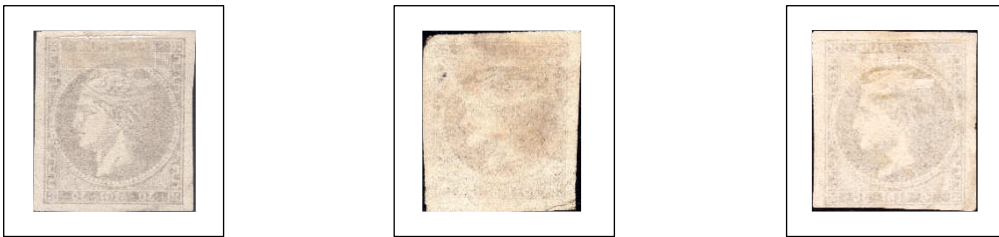
Paper used in the Athenian issues.

During the study of the stamps five different paper quality were distinguished

a. Very thin mainly meshed and transparent yellowish paper



b. Very thin mainly meshed, quite transparent whitish paper



c. Paper of medium thickness and heavy



d. Thick and porous paper even almost as thick as a carton



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

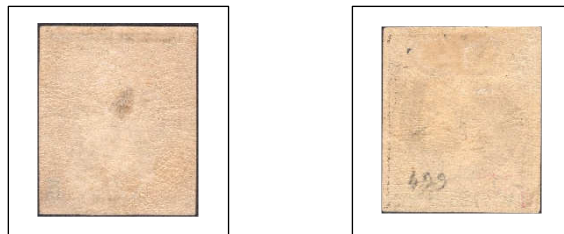
The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

e. White or whitish paper. This is a quite rare quality of paper.



Samples of gum used.

a. light off-yellowish and thin



b. Thick and fragile

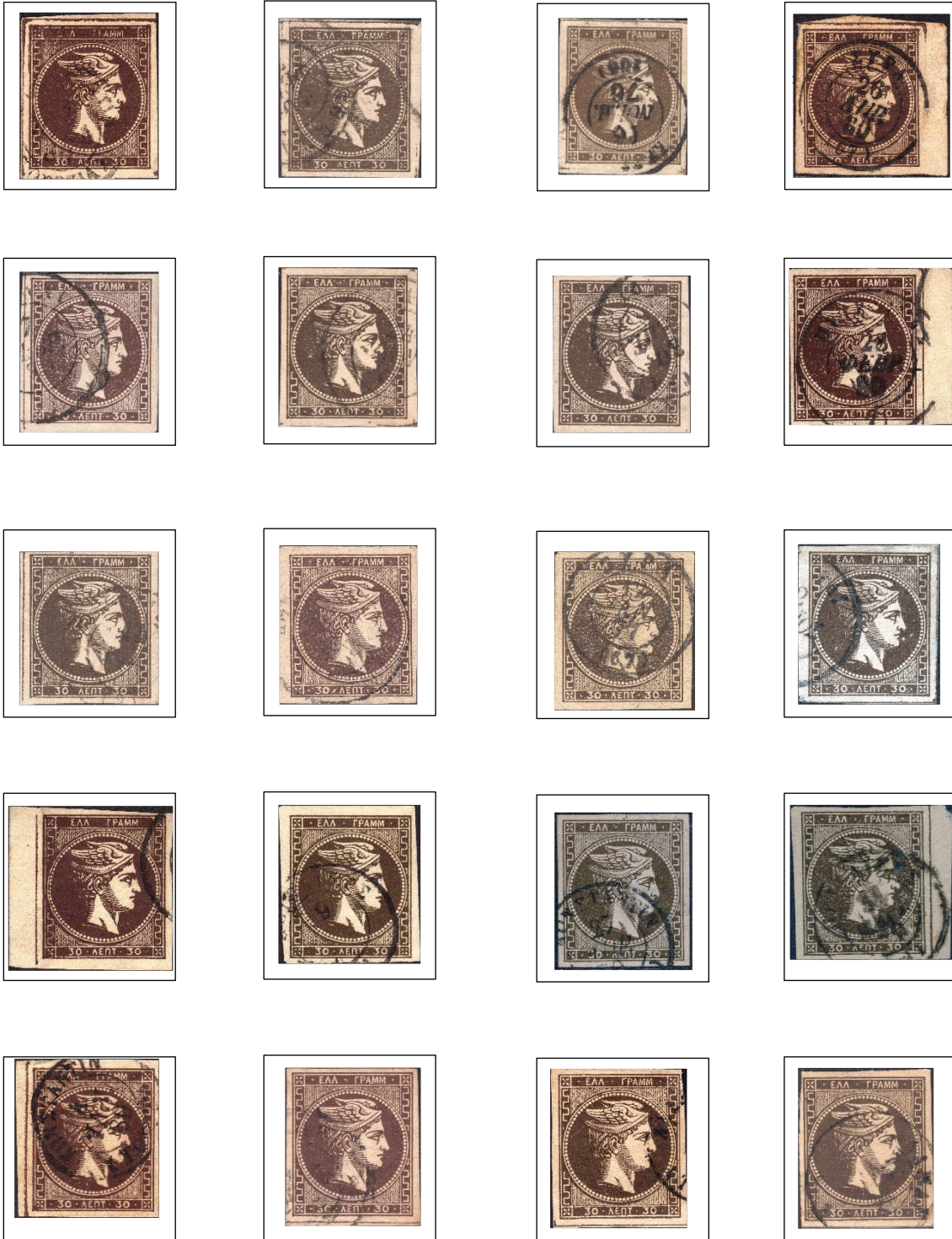


The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

Border-frame-lines

As was mentioned the result of soldering many cliches together during the making of the plates, caused a “projecting rim” around every cliché and the two parts of the double plate. These border-frame-lines may be seen as intense lines, lesser lines or dots and crosses at the end of every stamp. These border-frame-lines previously were known as “Gianniotis lines”. They are not often in the Paris issue.



All the above positions are random.

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

Shading of the stamps

The shading of these stamps is various but only five basic shades are mainly used.

a. Olive - brown



EL from Athens [ΑΘΗΝΑΙ (1) 31 ΜΑΡΤ. 81] to Constantinopolis [ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝ (ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ) 2 ΑΠΡ. 81]

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

Shading of the stamps

b. Red - brown



EL from Corfu [ΚΕΡΚΥΡΑ (106) 4 ΙΟΥΛ. 80] to Trieste [TRIESTE 18 7 80]

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

Shading of the stamps

c. Dark brown to black



EL from Piraeus [ΠΕΙΡΑΙΕΥΣ (2) 27 ΟΚΤ. 78] to Constantinopolis [ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝ. (ΤΟΥΡΚΙΑ) 30 ΟΚΤ. 78]

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

Shading of the stamps

d. Brown of different shades



EL from Patras [ΠΑΤΡΑΙ (9) 29 ΜΑΡΤ. 81] to Trieste [TRIESTE 14 4 81]

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 1st 30 lepta Athenian print of 1876-1877

Shading of the stamps

e. Printing on yellowish paper that highlights all the previously mentioned colours



EL from Corfu [KEPKYPA (106) 1 AYΓ. 78] to Taganrog (Pρωσία) [ΤΑΓΑΝΡΟΓ 11 ΑΒΓ 1878] via Odessa [ΟΔΕΚΑ 8 ΑΒΓ 1878]. The EI was supposed to travel via Trieste and Vienna, but for unknown reason it travelled via Black Sea and Odessa to Taganrog.

The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 2nd 30 lepta Athenian print of 1882

The colour of the stamps of this period changed according to the decision of U.P.U. for diminishing the problems caused in many countries with stamps of different values and similar colour. The Royal decree to change the colour of the stamps was published in 31/12/1881, and the colour of the 30 lepta changed in 1882. The duration of these printings was short, end of 1882, since the values for letters traveling abroad were lowered after a U.P.U decision to 25 lepta.

The ultramarine 30lepta stamps were circulated until the mid of May 1883. The Royal decree which declared the use of this colour was the No.31 of May the 8th, 1882 affected immediately. The brown 30 lepta were immediately out of use.



EARLIER DATE of USE
15 MAY 82.
Ultramarine



EARLIER DATE of USE
18 MAY 82.
Deep ultramarine

The general features of this print are like those of 1876-1877. The results of this print are remarkable, but even very bad. The plates were definitely well cleaned before the printing, but a later cleaning caused a lot of damage to them.



Fine printing



Partial double printing on the upper right corner



Partial double printing on the upper left corner



Vertically lined medallion background



Coarse and over-inked print



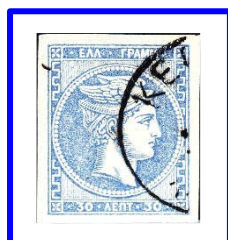
Coarse print with quadrille background



Quadrille background



Indentation 11½



Rare white paper



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 2nd 30 lepta Athenian print of 1882

Shading

a. Grey – ultramarine



b. Steel-blue

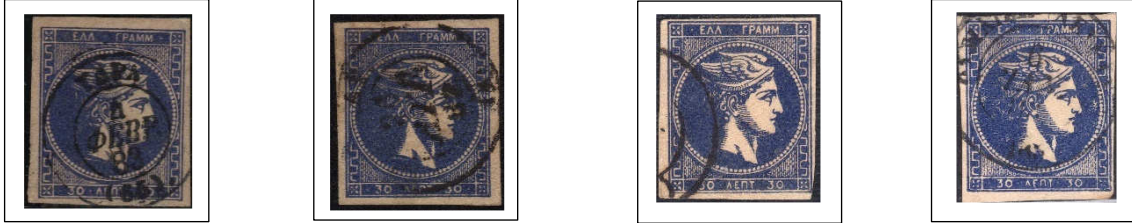


The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The 2nd 30 lepta Athenian print of 1882

Shading

c. Deep ultramarine



d. Ultramarine



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three issues

The position are declared with their numbering on the sheet. The left or right sheet is declared with 'L' or 'R'. The newer plate flaws published by me have been specified in photos of the plates which are kept in the Philatelic and Postal Museum in Athens, as in photos of the two half sheets (ultramarine, brown) from the same Museum and in a big block of imprimature in Mr. L. Fanchini's collection. The plate flaws are declared by a (D) if found in proof, with (P) if found in Paris print, with (A) if found in 1st Athenian and with (B) in 2nd Athenian print.

LEFT SHEET

Position 6L- (T) - The pearl stands between the two wings of the hat of Hermes. (B)



photograph



Position 25L- (E) - A small white line under the letter 'P' of the word 'ΓΡΑΜΜ' that makes it look like the latin letter 'R'. (A, B).



photographs



Position 53L – (E) – “deformed lower right floret”. This plate flaw is caused by a white dot on the upper right petal of the lower right floret. The Paris copy appears the same flaw but with no dot. (P, A, B)



photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

Position 94L- (T) - To the left 'M' of the word 'ΓΡΑΜΜ' extends horizontally a thin white line, and a small and tiny white line extends from the upper frame to the horizontal line. Additionally, a white dot with coloured center appears on the foot to the right of the second 'Λ' of the word 'ΕΛΛ'. The white dot appears only in the 1882 issue. (A, B)



photographs

Position 112L – (R) – “the lower right petal of the upper right floret is extended and connects with the right frameline obliquely”. (A, B)



photograph



Position 128L – (T) – “a brake of the inner frameline of the lower inscription on the lower left corner of the stamp”. (A, B)



photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

LEFT SHEET

Position 138L – (E) – “small white line which connects the letter ‘E’ of the ‘ΕΛΛ’ with the upper frame”. (A, B)



photograph



RIGHT SHEET

Position 1R – (C) – “Two parallel white lines. The lower is longer. The upper one begins from the upper left floret stretching to the circle and the lower starts from the first curve of the upper left meander and goes touches the circle”. (B)



photograph



Position 8R –(E)– “white line which crosses the lower right quarter of the stamp, starting from the neck of the god to the lower inscription”. (B) The lines of the positions 8 – 9 – 20 are continuous

photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

RIGHT SHEET

Position 9R – (E) – “white line which crosses obliquely the lower inscription from the left digit 30 to the opposite side of the inscription”. (B) The lines of the positions 8 – 9 – 20 are continuous



photograph



Position 10R – (E) – “4 mm long and 1 ½ mm wide white line opposite of the Hermes’ nose. It is called either ‘pipe’ or ‘sniffing Hermes’” (oldest known date 13.11.82). (B)

photograph



Position 15R – (C) – “white dot on the upper left part of the antenna of the first ‘M’ of the word ‘ΓΡΑΜΜ’”. (A, B)



photograph



A strip of 5 30 lepta, positions 12R-16R. The plate flaw of the position 15R is obvious, but not that of the position 16R which was probably caused later on. This strip derives from the ex-MAXIMUS Collection.



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

RIGHT SHEET

Position 16R – (C) – “white line that connects the mouth of Hermes to the opposite upper part of the right meander”. (A, B)



photograph



Position 20R – (E) – “14 mm white line which intersects the upper part of the stamp and starts from the word “ΕΛΛ” and crosses the circle of the medallion and stops in the upper right corner”. (B) The lines of the positions 8 – 9 – 20 are continuous.



photograph



Position 28R – (R) – “5 short parallel white lines on the area of the right dot of the upper inscription, two over, two under and one intersecting the dot”



photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

RIGHT SHEET

Position 40R- (T) - a small white line connects the first letter 'M' of the word 'ΓΡΑΜΜ' to the upper margin. It is found on the 1st and 2nd Athens printings. (A, B)



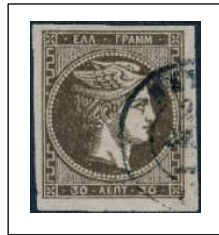
photograph



Position 66R – (T) – “white elongated dot on the lower left quarter of the coloured circle”, (D, P, A, B)



photograph



Position 70R – (T) – “rounded lower right corner of the outer frameline”. (D, P, A, B)



photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

RIGHT SHEET

Position 71R – (T) – broken lower frameline, near the left corner of the stamp, under the lower left floret”. (D, P, A, B)



photograph



Position 79R – (T) – “white dot on the opening of the letter ‘Α’ of the word ‘ΑΕΠΤ’ of the lower inscription”. (D, P, A, B)



photograph



Position 107R – (T) – “thin white line that connects the upper right petal of the lower left floret to the white frame above it”. (A, B)



photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

The Plate flaws of the three printings

RIGHT SHEET

Position 113R- (T) - A big colour dot between the eye and the eyebrow. This flaw appears on both the brown stamps of the 1876-1877 issue and the ultramarine stamps of the 1882 issue. (A, B)

photograph



Position 118R- (T) - A long colour dot which appears on the brown 30L stamps on the white circle of the medal between the 16th and 17th pearl of the medal connects the circle to the upper white frame slightly oblong to the left. On the ultramarine samples is cut in the middle, through the white frame and shows as two coloured dots.

Other dots appear (a) a colour dot on the 14th upper pearl of the circle, (b) a colour dot over the second 'M' of the word 'ΓΡΑΜΜ', and (c) a small colour dot along the 17th lower pearl of the circle. On the 1882 stamps there are more colour dots (a) on the white circle along the upper 5th pearl of the circle, (b) on the circle along the 1st pearl of the circle of the left side, (c) on the circle between the lower 22nd and 23rd pearls of the circle, (d) on the last turn of the upper left meander, and (e) a small dot on the front part of the hat of the god, under the base of the right wing. (A, B)

photograph



The Athenian issues of 1876-1877 and 1882

Forgeries of the 30 Lepta

According to Feenstra, Vlastos and B. Ure the forgers started to counterfeit the Greek stamps since the first beginning. Most of the forgeries are unsuccessful imitations.

Paris issue Forgeries

The Genoa "A" and "B" by Imperato



Athenian Issues Forgeries

Alisafi type "B" forgeries

These forgeries appear in blocks of 4 and they are totally different in between, but they have the same characteristics. The following forgeries are the lower two of a block of 4 (B3-B4).



The Fournier forgeries

All his stamps have the same characteristics, like the shading lines.



