

1867. First Volcano Issue.



Figure 2-1. The four 1867 issue values.

Emission details :

Printing Method : Engraving.

Perforation : 12.

Paper : White wove and soft porous.

No Watermark.

First Printing (Sept. 1866):

- 1 ½ r indigo
- 2 1 r deep vermilion
- 3 2 r deep green
- 4 4 r cinnamon brown

Second Printing (Apr. 1873):

- 1a ½ r blue or dark blue
- 2a 1 r bright vermilion
- 3a 2 r green
- 4a 4 r deep bistre or bistre

As a result of the increase in volume of mail handled by the country, the government of Francisco Dueñas decided in 1866 to issue the first postage stamps, which were ordered from the American Bank Note Company of New York (ABN). The stamps were printed in September of that same year, and arrived to El Salvador on December 17th. They were officially issued on January 17, 1867, but their use was not mandatory until March 1st.

The stamps were issued in the ½r, 1r, 2r, and 4r values, all having the same central design: A horizontally lined oval enclosing a smoking volcano rising above the sea, and surmounted by 11 stars representing the 11 departments existing at the time (Chalatenango, Cuzcatlan, La Libertad, La Paz, La Union, San Miguel, San Salvador, Santa Ana, San Vicente, Sonsonate, and Usulután). Above and below the oval were ornamental scrolls bearing the words 'CORREOS DEL' and 'SALVADOR' respectively, in unshaded capital letters. Smaller scrolls on each side carried the value in smaller capitals, and on each corner were small disks enclosing the numeral of value. The background between the oval and the scrolls consisted of numerous tiny figures of value in the ½r and the 4r values, and of letters in the 1r (UN) and two (DOS) reales.

Traditionally, the volcano on the central oval has been considered to be the San Miguel volcano. However, since the stamps are allegorical representations of the coat of arms existing at the time, the stamps really depict not the San Miguel, but the Izalco volcano (popularly known as 'El Faro del Pacífico' - 'The Lighthouse of the Pacific'). This argument is based on the fact that the decree creating the coat of arms specifically mentions the Izalco volcano as the inspiration for its design, and also on the idea that the Izalco volcano was (and still is) one of the symbols of the country.

There are two printings of this issue, the one in September 1866 already mentioned, and another in April 1873. The printings can be distinguished by the different color shades for each printing, and by the heavy yellow gum used on the first printing, which differs from the thin white gum used for the latter. It can be assumed that the second printing was necessary because of the 7 years the first printing was used.

The ABN records also show an order for a third printing of the four values in 1896, but apparently it was cancelled. It is not known why there was a request for such a late printing, since by that time the 1867 issue had already been demonetized in El Salvador, so there was no legitimate postal use for it. Due to the fact that this 'cancelled' printing order included all the XIX century ABN issues of El Salvador, we suspect that Nicholas Seebeck or his brother-in-law Ernest Schernikow could have ordered it.



Figure 2-2. 4 r block of 20, second largest block known

The stamps were engraved and recess printed in sheets of 100 arranged in 10 rows of 10, each stamp measuring 24 ½x18 ½ mm. No plates or control numbers were used during the printing, although tiny dots may be found on all four values. These were engraved below the design on the transfer rolls as guides to the proper placing of the stamp in the horizontal row immediately below. On the ½r and 1r values, the dot was placed 3¾ mm from the center of the lower frame line of the design, and in those values it is usually seen on the left side of the second 'O' of 'CORREOS'. On the 2r and 4r values, the dot was placed 4 ½ mm below the lower part of the design, and it is not often visible. Furthermore, on some of the ½r a dot can be found in the margin just above the frame line of the top row of the sheets. In other stamps of the same value, the dot appears in different positions, indicating that they were marked on the plate by hand, being intended to serve as a guide to the placing of the ten stamps of the uppermost row. Owing to the different positions they occupied, they were found in practice to be useless, and therefore ignored.

Two papers were used: A hard white wove and a soft porous. The perforation gauges 12, although due to the different perforating machines used by the American Bank Note, the gauge can oscillate between 11.85 and 11.95. The gauge differences for the four values are summarized in the following table:

| Gauge | ½ r | 1 r | 2 r | 4 r |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 11.85 x 11.85 | X | | X | X |
| 11.85 x 11.95 | X | X | X | X |
| 11.95 x 11.95 | X | X | X | X |
| 11.95 x 11.85 | X | | | |

Table 2-1. Gauge differences for the 1867 issue.

Sometimes the pins on the perforating machines got out of alignment, producing differences in the stamps' size. These differences amount to an extended length of almost 3 mm in some examples.

In 1883, all remainders of this and the 1874 issue were sold to the Berlin stamp dealer David Cohn. Even though there was a large amount of remainders left when the issue was demonetized, full sheets are relatively scarce for the $\frac{1}{2}$ r, 1 r, and the 2r. No full sheets are known for the 4r, the largest block being of 32 stamps. All sheets were inscribed 'American Bank Note Company, New York' in the margin edges, and 'Compañía Americana de Billetes de Banco de Nueva York' in the margin center.

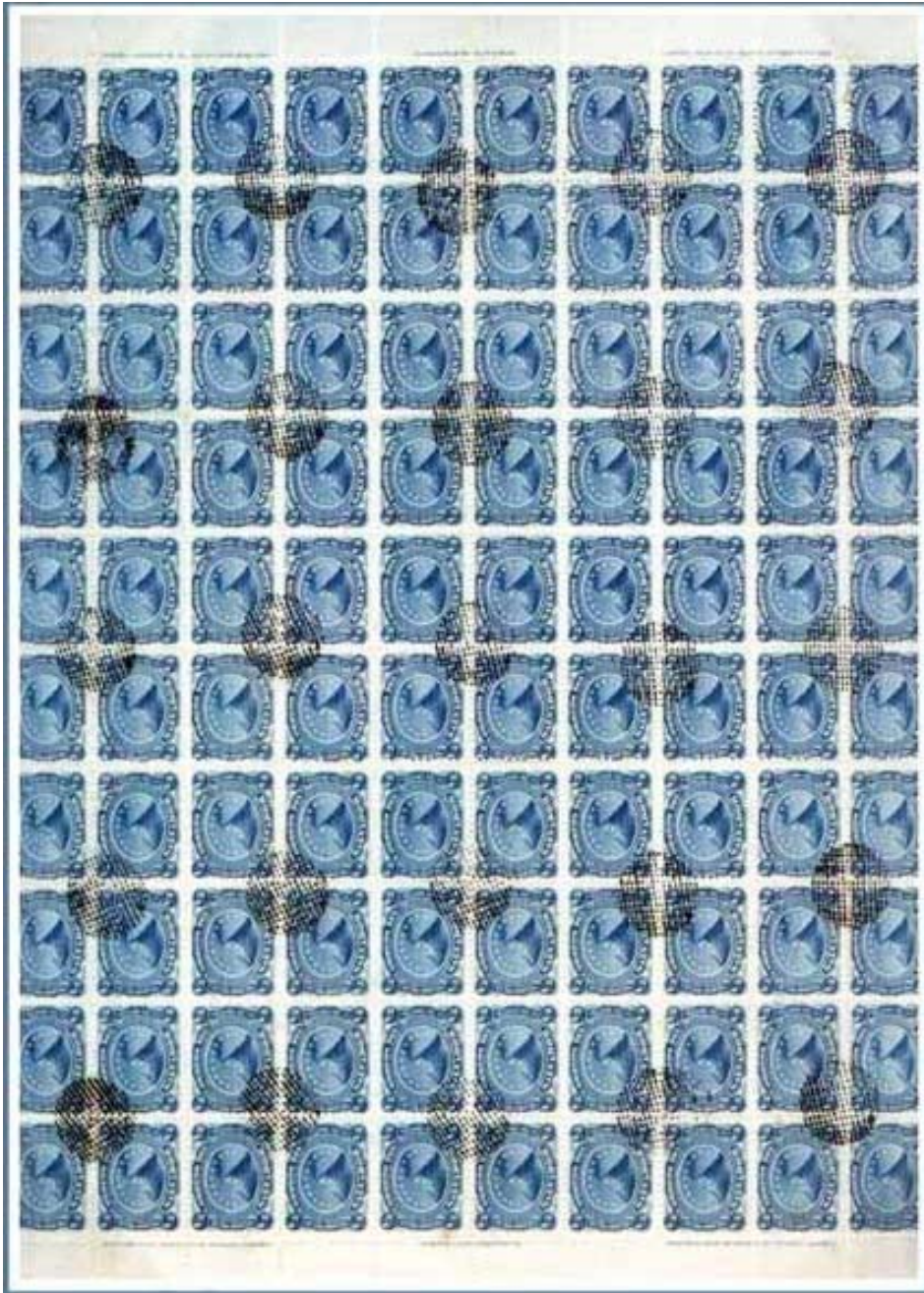


Figure 2-3. $\frac{1}{2}$ r full sheet, cancelled as a remainder.

American Bank Note Company Proofs & Essays for the 1867 issue.

The American Bank Note Company made several sketches, essays, die proofs, and plate proofs during the production of its stamps. Most of these items were closely guarded and only came on the market when the ABN sold its archives.

A. Pen Sketches

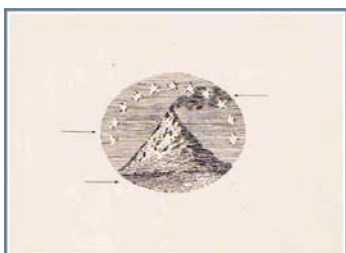


Figure 2-4. Original pen sketch of unadopted design of vignette :

Thinner shading lines on the emitted smoke and on sea waves on the left side of the volcano. Volcano slope with heavier shading lines.



Figure 2-5. Original pen sketch of adopted design of vignette :

Heavier lines on the emitted smoke and on sea waves on the left side of the volcano. Volcano slope with finer shading lines.



Figure 2-6. Original pen sketches for ½, 1, 2, & 4 r stamp frames.

B. Die Proofs.



Figure 2-7. Die proof on cardboard. Die proofs exist for the 4 values, either on india paper or card.



Figure 2-8. Trail proof of 1r value tablet. (Detail at right)



Figure 2-9. Unhardened die proof of ¼ r unissued value, mounted on Index card. Apparently, this value was requested in the initial run, but it was never produced because there was no valid use for it.

C. Plate Proofs & Essays.



Figure 2-10. Plate proofs were also issued for the four values in both india paper and cardboard. The cardboard backing was attached to the india paper prior to printing. Only one set of plate proof sheets exists, which is illustrated in Appendix 2.



Figure 2-11. The only known trial color proof is the 1/2 r in green (right). Done as part of the production process.

D. Specimens.



Figure 2-12. Plate proof pair overprinted '0000'



Figure 2-13. Plate proofs overprinted 'Specimen'

El Salvador did not overprint proofs with 'Specimen' or '0000'. It was done by the ABN, but it is not certain when.

American Bank Note Company Samples & Collages of the 1867 issue.



Figure 2-14. Shade examples of 1867 issue imperforated (top row) & perforated samples (bottom row).



Figure 2-15. ABN Sample Sheet. El Salvador is represented in this sheet with the ½ r value of the 1867 issue.

During the late 1860's, the ABN printed a typographed, imperforated trade sheet depicting 19 stamps from 11 different issuing entities the company worked for: Canada, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, and El Salvador. These sheets were used by salesmen as samples and color palettes. In some cases, the ABN even cut up some of the sheets and gummed and perforated individual proofs, to show prospective customers what they could expect of their services. Since most of the sheets were cut by collectors, nowadays, only four sheets are known, each in a different color : pale green, lime green, claret, light brown, and black. However, El Salvador samples can be found in three different formats, each with a different number of shades :

- **Imperforate on soft wove paper :** About a 100 different colors, strong to faint.
- **Imperforate on white bond paper :** About 20 strong colors.
- **Perforated and gummed on white paper :** About 10 to 12 strong colors.

The ABN also used plate proofs of the 1867 issue in several collages done by apprentices during their training process at the company's art school. Most of these collages were framed and used as office decoration, but others, like the one in the opposite page were part of a two volume selection of collages that was kept in the ABN Chairman's Office.



Figure 2-16. ABN collage with a complete set of 1867 issue plate proofs.

Recorded Cancellations.

When the 1867 issue was introduced, El Salvador continued to use for a time some of its prephilatelic cancellations, but in most cases, postal authorities made new cancels for these issues. These new cancellations, which were all mute*, were used in conjunction with date stamps identifying the city where the letter was posted. Most of them are found blurred, either from the pressure exerted or from the ink which tended to bleed. Seven cancels were used for this issue :



Figure 2-17.



- **Franco** : It is the earliest cancelling device used on the first issue. Known in red, blue, and black. Remained in use until 1879.



Figure 2-18.

- **Fleur-de-lis** : Characterized by small fleur-de-lis in successive horizontal rows, each formed by 4 diamonds.



Figure 2-19.

- **Dots** : Formed by rows of very small dots.



Figure 2-20.

- **Star** : Unframed star with a 20mm diameter.



Figure 2-21.



- **Diamonds** : Rows of diamonds forming a circle.

- **Lines** : Lines forming unshaded diamonds.

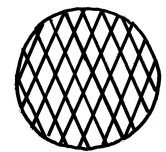


Figure 2-22.



- **Double S** : Two letters 'S' inside a circle.



Figure 2-23.



* A cancellation is considered "mute", "blind", or "dumb" if it does not show any information regarding the date or place of usage.

Pen cancellations were also applied in black or violet. No other color is known genuinely used.

Occasionally some stamps can be found cancelled by the datestamps that were used along the cancels already mentioned.



Figure 2-24.



Figure 2-25. 1867 stamp with a cancellation used for later issues.

There are other cancellations that can be found on this issue; however, some only came to use in later years, a few were fiscal or telegraph cancellations, and other are outright frauds. Stamps with later period cancellations can be considered cancel to order. Fraudulent cancellations will be covered in the Bogus & Fakes section.

Maritime Cancels :

These cancellations were applied to 1867 issues by foreign ships performing postal duties (Some of them belonging to the Central American Steamship Company). Even though they can be found on all values, most commonly are found in the 1r. Some ships having maritime cancellations were the SS. Union, SS. Granada, Purser, Clyde, and the Suntermarks.



Figure 2-26. Maritime cancellations on the 1867 issue..