

FIRST ATTEMPT TO PRINT STAMPS IN INDIA : THE LION & PALM TREE ESSAYS

SCOPE:

The Lion & Palm tree essays was the first attempt to print stamps in India under the British rule in 1853 after the regional SCINDE DAWKS (1852-53) were being stopped from being used by the British government. These essays are extremely hard to collect as they are rare and generally buried in traditional India exhibits as singles. Here in this exhibit you can find representation of 1853 die proofs and color trials. 1890 and 1922 era Lion Palm Essays of India along with a very rare intact copy of a complete Zincograph sheet from 1890 containing unused dies of half anna, one anna and two anna stamps including the Lion and Palm essays.

PHILATELIC BACKGROUND:

The Stamp Office at Calcutta was chosen for manufacturing of postage stamps in India. In early 1853, the Government of India appointed Colonel Forbes, the Superintendent of Machinery at the Calcutta Mint, about manufacturing stamps on their behalf. Soon after, Colonel Forbes produced a design, the famous 'Lion and Palm Tree', which had appeared on the gold mohur (sovereign) of 1847. This design could not be scaled for practical purposes and lacked the Queen Victoria image hence was never issued and is known as an **ESSAY**.

The printing process had many iterations and the nomenclature and rationale is described below:

- The 1853 design was checked after engraving as singles, strips, and quadruples and these imprints are called **DIE PROOFS**.
- The 1853 master die was also used to finalize different inks for printing and those imprints are called as **COLOR TRIALS**.
- The British Indian Postal Department prepared set of **REPRINTS** from original dies in 1890 and 1922 to ensure the effort was properly documented as well as to test new methods of printing namely Zincography and Photogravure techniques.
- The 1890 reprints were made using Zincography as well as Photogravure on wove paper.
- The 1922 reprints were made by Photogravure method on stout card prior to detaching of the original die.

REFERENCES:

- This identification of the Essays Proofs and Reprints of the 1854 issue of India by James A. Spence (The ultimate reference book with detailed study of Essays, Proofs and Reprints of India and institutions for this collection. Hence, new discoveries are cited as "UNKNOWN to Spence").
- India's Unofficial First Series 1854 A specialized study of First Printing by D.R. Jala
- Stamps of India by Jai Cooper
- Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage stamps Vol II: The Empire in Asia, Robinson Lines 1951
- Creators of India: Six Shandas (written by David Pezzman 2011)
- Postage Stamps, emblems, engravings and telegraph stamps of British India and Ceylon, Philatelic Society London 1882
- Robinson Lines Auction Catalogue: India the Specialized collection of Essays, Proofs and reprints formed by James A. Spence 1977
- Charles's Robinson Lines Auction Catalogue 1985: India the First & most Collection

1852 SCINDE DAWK regional issues, first stamp of Asia



White Scinde Dawk



Blue Scinde Dawk

1853 1st DIE II which was not proper and was destroyed

1853 DIE II LION PALM TREE DESIGN impressions from the 1st DIE II which was destroyed after taking initial imprints. Showing incomplete transfer of design, outer frame lines due to crude engraving "UNKNOWN to SPENCE"



1853 DIE II PROOF in Vermilion Thin Soft Yellowish wove paper UNIQUE



Vermilion



Carmine



Indigo



Green

1853 DIE II PROOF COLOR TRIALS from the 1st DIE II which was DESTROYED Thin Soft Yellowish wove paper, UNIQUE

1853 New DIE II in Quadruple format



DIE II features: Foliage frame and branch less bent over lion's back, tail and body gap small, lion's head large broader

PROOF IMPRESSION OF THE DIE



1853 Die II Thin Soft Yellowish Paper VERMILION Matrix Die Single Imprint

FINAL ESSAY



1853 Die II ESSAY Thick Soft Yellowish Card VERMILION

COLOR TRIALS OF THE ESSAY



Quadruple Die II GREYISH LILAC Thin soft yellowish paper Certified PPSL, 2019



Quadruple Die II PALE GREY Thin soft yellowish paper Certified PPSL, 2019



Quadruple Die II CANARY YELLOW Thin soft yellowish paper Certified PPSL, 2019

1853 DIE I which was destroyed in 1867



DIE I features: Lion's head large broader



1853 Die I Thick Yellow Card DEEP VERMILION



1853 Die I Thick Yellowish Card BLACK UNKNOWN to Spence

OUTLINE OF EXHIBIT

The 1853 Die Proof & Color trials

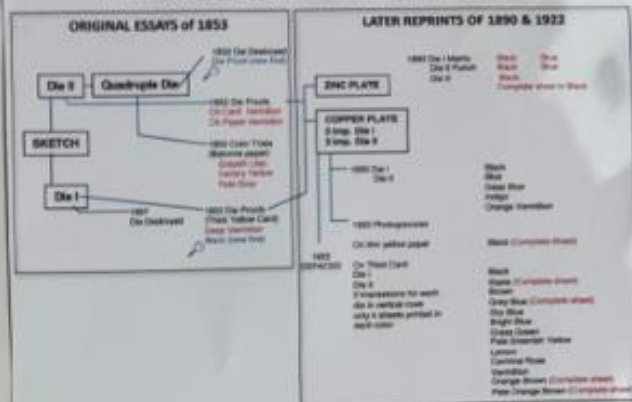
The 1890 Zincograph on wove paper

The 1890 Copper plate Photogravures on wove paper

The 1922 Copper Photogravures plate on stout card

Forgeries & epilogue

PRINTING TIMELINES OF THE LION & PALM TREE ESSAYS



Rare and Unique items

Original Research ("UNKNOWN to Spence" items)