

Peru Philatelic Study Circle

APS Affiliate Member # 258



Trencito

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Thank you for reading Trencito 2

Peru Philatelic Study Circle

Trencito2



Editor's Notes

This edition will feature articles for the newer philatelists interested in exploring the challenges of collecting Peru. I have written an introduction to the War of the Pacific, with a focus on the overprints. (I am saving the provisional issues for a future edition. Is anybody interested in writing one?) In this issue, Charles Wooster has written an article on the origin of the triangle overprints, and Willem de Gelder has granted permission to reprint a letter and supplemented it with his PowerPoint presentation on identifying the 11 triangle types.

I want to thank Charles Wooster, Willem de Gelder and Guillermo Llosa for contributions and advice for this issue.

We note the passing of Tom Myers. He was an active PPSC member and the previous editor of *Trencito 2*. Mr. Myers was also involved with COPAPHIL, the Colombia and Panama Philatelic Study Group, and was a Latin America columnist for Linn's Stamp News. Tom will be missed by many.

Please consider writing an article for *Trencito 2*. You may send articles to me at dnpaddock@hotmail.com. We prefer that articles be submitted in Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect using Times New Roman or Georgia 11 font for the text and Calibri 11 font for the illustration explanations. We welcome comments on previous articles as well.

David Paddock, Editor

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An Introduction to the Pacific War, 1879-1883

David Paddock

A Primer on the War of the Pacific, 1879-1884

Advanced collectors of Peru are familiar with the War of the Pacific, which is also called the Salt Peter War between Chile on one side and Bolivia with their defense pact ally, Peru, on the other side. The era offers many collecting opportunities and an excellent area of specialization with various provisional issues and postmarks and Chilean overprints on Peru stamps as well as Chilean stamps postmarked in the occupied territories. This article will address the various war-era overprints.

Christine Hunefeldt describes the war as “one of the most destructive events in modern Peruvian history.”⁴ She goes on to say the war was “ill-advised and ultimately catastrophic.”⁴

The War of the Pacific ended with Peru losing mineral-rich territory and Bolivia losing not only territory but their access to the Pacific Ocean. Even though the war started in 1879, the settlement was not until 1929 when the parties signed the Treaty of Lima. Previously, on 20 October 1883, Chile and Peru signed the Treaty of Ancón to settle territorial disputes. The treaty specified that Chile would control Tarapacá (previously Peruvian territory) and retain the provinces of Tacna and Arica from Peru for ten years. A plebiscite to determine the two provinces' fate was to be held in 1893. The plebiscite was never held. In 1909 Chile began to colonize both Arica and Tacna. In 1922 the two countries agreed to arbitrate with the President of the United States, Calvin Coolidge. The Treaty of Lima, 1929, returned Tacna to Peru. Chile paid Peru the equivalent of \$6 million and agreed to build a port in Arica for Peruvian use.

The most direct cause of the war and the reason often cited is the new tax that Bolivia imposed on a Chilean mining company (Compañía de Salitres y Ferrocarril de Antofagasta, or CSFA). In an 1874 boundary treaty, Bolivia agreed not to increase taxes on Chilean companies mining in Bolivia for 25 years. The treaty permitted Chile to mine guano and minerals in the Antofagasta territory, although the exact boundaries between the two countries were in dispute. The Bolivian President, Hilarión Daza, who overthrew the Bolivian government in 1878, refused to honor the 1874 treaty. Bolivia also claimed that their legislature never ratified that treaty, so the conditions did not apply. When the Bolivian President Daza moved to confiscate and auction the property of CSFA, Chile forces occupied the city of Antofagasta.

Chile gave Bolivia an ultimatum to accept arbitration, but Daza did not respond. On 14 February 1879, Chile invaded the Antofagasta port on Bolivian territory. At the time, Bolivia had access to the Pacific Ocean in the Antofagasta or Atacama province.

Bolivia and Peru agreed to a secret mutual defense treaty in 1873. Initially, Peru tried to mediate the dispute, but Bolivia declared war on Chile on 1 March 1879 and summoned Peru to help Bolivian forces. Chile encouraged Peru to declare neutrality.

Peru refused the neutrality position, and Chile declared war on both Peru and Bolivia on 5 April 1879.

While the imposition of the tax was the precipitating event, there may have been other reasons for Chile and Peru to go to war. All three countries faced several economic challenges and crises in the 1870s, particularly in Chile. Copper and wheat exports were down, and the Chileans viewed the nitrate-rich regions of the north as new wealth.

Some members of the Chilean government held shares in the Chilean mining companies that worked the mines in Bolivia under the 1874 boundary treaty. These government officials feared that the Bolivian dictator Daza would seize their investments, which he eventually tried to do.⁶

Another potential motive for war included control of the southern Pacific Ocean. Peru attempted to monopolize the area's commerce by rewarding ships that docked in Callao instead of Valparaiso. Chile may have seen war with Peru as an opportunity to gain valuable international commerce.

Sater⁶ states that Peru's motive to refuse Chile's request for neutrality and join Bolivia in the war was their desire to monopolize the nitrate industry in the South to offset the loss of guano revenue and increase prices of nitrates. although this interpretation is controversial. As mentioned previously, the Peru economy in the 1870s was in crisis. Guano exports, once an economic stabilizer, decreased by nearly 40%, and mining from the past decade nearly depleted the primary source of guano in the Chincha Islands.²

Historians and writers have documented the battles and campaigns of the war, so I will now present only a summary of the most significant events and then move into the philatelic aspects of the war.

The first military action began on 14 February 1879, with the occupation of Antofagasta, Bolivia's major port city, by Chilean troops. For the first six months, Peru and Chile fought battles on the sea with naval forces. The land campaign started on 5 April 1879 at Calama and the blockade of Iquique. This was a tactic designed to draw Peru into the land battle, but Peru did not respond. However, Peru lost its best Ironclad ship, *Independencia*, in the battle of Iquique, 21 May 1879.

Six months later, on 8 October 1879, Chile won a decisive sea battle at Anagamos. This battle opened the seas for Chile and set up the Tarapaca campaign, which included the landing and occupation of Pisagua by Chilean troops and the Battle of San Francisco (also referred to as Dolores), where Chile defeated the allied troops. On 27 November 1879, the allied forces defeated Chile at Tarapacá and then retreated to Arica, leaving the Province of Tarapacá to the Chileans to occupy. The next day, Chile blockaded Arica.

Peru's failure to retain possession of Tarapacá caused rioting in Lima, and while President Prado of Peru was out of the country, Nicolás de Piérola staged a *coup de état* and took power on 23 December 1879. Meanwhile, President Diaz of Bolivia left for Europe with \$500,000 when he heard of the Peru coup. General Narcisco Campero became President of Bolivia.

On 22 March 1880, Peru lost a significant battle at Los Ángeles, which cut the supply line from Lima to Arica and Tacna. This Peruvian defeat left only three allied positions in the south, Arequipa, Arica, and Tacna.

The Chilean army soundly defeated the allied forces in the Battle of Tacna. Chile now concentrated in the port city of Arica so that it could supply troops and evacuate their wounded soldiers. Arica fell on 7 June 1880, about two weeks after the Battle of Tacna. These victories emboldened Chile to launch an attack on Lima. According to Sater, a Chilean officer told the British naval commander “that if the Peruvians continued to resist, Lima would be “erased from the map.”⁶

A small Chilean force landed near Pisco while a much larger force landed at Chilca, only about 25 miles from Lima. Over 23,000 Chilean troops charged 18,000 Peruvians in Chorrillos on 13 January 1881, where the Chileans destroyed Lima’s first line of defense. The Chileans followed the Chorrillos victory with another victory at Miraflores on 15 January 1881. The Chileans occupied Lima two days after the Miraflores battle on 17 January 1881.

The following summary of events is courtesy of Guillermo J. Llosa, an authority on the War of the Pacific.

Cronología de eventos: Inicio de la Guerra hasta la ocupación de Lima		
	Aspectos político-militares	Aspectos filatélicos
14 de febrero de 1879	Escuadra chilena ocupa Antofagasta y rápidamente ocupa el litoral Boliviano	Chile establece la franquicia postal general para todos los territorios ocupados. (8 de Mayo hasta primeros meses de 1880
4 Abril, 1879	Chile le declara la guerra al Perú	
15 Junio , 1879		Perú es aceptado como miembro de la UPU
8 Octubre de 1879	Combate de Angamos	
Noviembre 2, 1879	Chilenos ocupan Pisagua	
Noviembre 23 1879	Chilenos ocupan Iquique	Sigue funcionando la Oficina Postal Inglesa
Diciembre 18, 1879	Presidente Prado se embarca a Europa; Pierola es presidente en golpe de estado	Chile nombra administrador de correos de Iquique
26 de Mayo de 1880	Chilenos ocupan Tacna	
7 de Junio de 1880	Chilenos ocupan Arica	
5 Enero 5, 1880		Sobresello de Plata Perú
Diciembre 1880		Chile bloquea y bombardea Puertos Peruanos
Enero 13-15	Batallas de San Juan y Miraflores El Perú es dividido en 3 zonas Político Militares	

Philatelic Aspects

The effective date for Peru joining the Universal Postal Union was 1 April 1879. Peru joined Bolivia in their fight against Chile only five days earlier, on 5 April 1879. However, Great Britain filed a complaint that Peru had not made appropriate arrangements to handle international mail, so Peru’s entry was postponed until 15 June 1879. Because currency depreciated rapidly in Peru after the start of the war, postage for foreign mail had to be in silver money, or its equivalent at the rate of exchange at the time of posting.

On 5 January 1880, the postal authorities issued two classes of stamps: one with the overprint “UPU Plata Peru” in a double oval for foreign mail indicating the sender paid the postage in silver; the second class of stamp without the overprint for domestic postage. (Scott 21-29 without the overprint and Scott numbers 32-37 with the overprint. Note: the 10ct Grey, Scott 26 was not issued until 1884). The post office issued the overprinted stamps on 5 January 1880 (Scott) or 6 January through June 1880 (Gibbons).

Primeras tarifas UPU: 1ro de Abril de 1879				
	En Moneda de Plata		En billete	
	Vía Panamá	Otras rutas	Vía Panamá	Otras rutas
Cartas	11 centavos	10 centavos	27 centavos	24 centavos
Tarjetas Postales	No circularon durante la Guerra			
Impresos	3 centavos	2 centavos	8 centavos	5 centavos
Notar que el Perú consideró que su tarifa básica era 25 céntimos de Franco (5 cvos) Conducción marítima 25 céntimos (5 cvos) y vía Panamá 5 céntimos lo que equivale a 25+25+5 o 55 céntimos o 11 centavos de Plata				

As noted in the table above, postage paid in silver was considerably different than in cash. This information is courtesy of Guillermo J. Llosa.



Scott 33 Double Oval Peru UPU overprint

The overprint was applied by hand, resulting in frequent inverted or double overprints. The premium for these varieties over the standard catalog listing is as follows for used specimens. For example, if a catalog listing for the normal variety is \$1.00, and the value of the variety is x10, the variety would be valued at \$10.00.

Scott Number and Description	Value of variety (x standard catalog value)
32 1c Green	Inverted x9; Double x14
33 2c Rose	Inverted x10; Double x 12
36 50c Green	Inverted x2 (used); Double x2.2 (used)

The 2-cent carmine or rose overprint was made with blue ink, and Gibbons (Stanley Gibbons number 37) lists only that variety. Scott lists two varieties for the 2-cents rose, Scott number 33 with a blue overprint and Scott number 34 with a black overprint. Scott 34 has a significantly higher catalog value. However, W.G. Howland cites Senor Puppo, who said, “the black appearance occurred simply because the ink in the pans used for overprinting became thicker and darker as it was gradually used up.”³

To replace the hand-stamped Plata overprint, Peru ordered a series of stamps for domestic and foreign use. Those stamps for foreign use had the inscription “Universal Postal Union – Peru” inside a horseshoe shape. According to Howland, “The first shipment of these stamps and postal stationery was captured by the Chilean navy in July 1881, from the steamer Islay. A second shipment safely reached Callao and was transported to Ica, where they held the stamps and stationery until the Chilean occupation ended. A third shipment, consisting of 10c pearl gray stamps for domestic use and not overprinted (Scott 26, Gibbons 276), was also saved and sent to Ecuador. The post office did not issue this stamp until 16 January 1884, when hostilities had ended.”³

Chilean forces occupied Lima on 17 January 1881. The Postmaster General of Peru informed the UPU he no longer had control of the post office services for all of Peru, so to account for international postage from areas over which he did have control, he ordered an overprint of the double oval with the words “UPU Plata Lima” instead of “UPU Plata Peru” on the stamps (Scott 38-42.) The post office issued these stamps on 28 January 1881, just eleven days after the occupation.



Scott J6 Double Oval Lima UPU overprint

Because postage stamps were in short supply, the Postmaster General ordered that postage due stamps be overprinted for domestic use. The dark red overprint applied by the post office read “Lima Correos” within a double circle. Salvatecci states the Lima correos overprint on the deficit stamps occurred after the Chilean troops occupied the Postal Administration of Lima. On 5 December the postage due stamps were issued. According to Puppo, large stocks of stamps were withdrawn from the Caja Fiscal de Lima where large stocks of stamps were kept on 20 October. The Peruvian Post Office then overprinted these values to differentiate them. Mr. Llosa⁹ favors the Puppo version, and the illustration of Scott J13 on the next page supports the Puppo version.



Scott J13, Gibbons D54. Postmark 29 October 1881
Postage Due stamp used for domestic postage.

When the Chileans took over the post office on 1 December 1881, they terminated using these overprinted postage due stamps after 40 days.

Coat of Arms Overprint

When the Chilean administration reopened the post offices in Lima and Callao on 3 December 1881, they initially sold the Peru stamps with the two Lima overprints (Scott 38-42 and J11-J15.) But the public continued to use stamps purchased previously instead of buying them from the Chilean-run post office. To remedy this, the chief of the occupation forces ordered that Peru stamps have an overprint of the Chilean coat of arms.

On 13 December 1881, Peru Scott numbers N11-N17 were issued with the Chilean coat of arms overprint.



Scott N13, Black



Scott N15, Red

Chilean Coat of Arms Overprint on Peru stamps

Inverted shields and double strikes have been reported for some of the values. The following table follows the Scott listings.

Shield Varieties on Peru Stamps

Scott Number and Description	Inverted Arms	Double Strike
N11 1c Orange, blue overprint	Yes	No
N12 2c Dark violet, black overprint	Yes	Yes
N13 2c Rose, black overprint*	Yes (No*)	No
N14 5c Blue, red overprint	Yes	No
N15 5c Ultramarine, red overprint*	No (Yes*)	No
N16 10c Green, red overprint	Yes	Yes
N17 20c Red-brown, blue overprint	No	No

*The Stanley Gibbons catalog lists no inverted arms for the 2c rose variety and includes an inverted arms variety for the 5c ultramarine value. W.G. Howland agrees with the Gibbons listing.

Another issue, Scott N19-N23, with the horseshoe overprint that the Chileans captures at Chimbote, were overprinted with the Chilean coat of arms as well. The post office also issued these stamps on 3 December 1881. As with the previous set, some stamps have inverted and double strike shields.



Scott N 23, Red Overprint

Chilean Coat of Arms within Peru Horseshoe Overprint

The following table uses Scott numbers and descriptions.

Scott Number and Description	Inverted Arms	Double Strike	Horseshoe Inverted
N19 1c Green, red overprint	Yes	Yes	Yes
N20 5c Blue, red overprint	Yes	Yes	No
N21 50c Rose, Black overprint	Yes	No	No
N22 50c Rose, Blue overprint	No	No	No
N23 1 sol Ultra, red overprint*	Yes	Yes	Yes

* The 1s value also has both the arms and horseshoe inverted. The Gibbons and Scott listings agree on this set.

The Scott catalog states, “There are numerous counterfeits with the overprint in both correct and fancy colors.” When the colors are correct, one may detect a forgery from a genuine overprint by examining the star and plumes on either side of the shield. The star on the genuine stamp is slightly larger, and the plumes have non-shaded areas. In the forgeries, the plumes are nearly solid.

At the end of the war Peru regained control of the post office, which led to another set of overprints, the triangle overprints beginning in 1883. The origin of the triangle overprints is the topic of the next article.

In addition to the overprints on Peru stamps, many provisional issues were released, and Chilean stamps were used in Bolivia and Peru, adding two other dimensions to this challenging topic.

For a detailed account of the War of the Pacific, I refer readers to *Andean Tragedy* by William Sater. For a more detailed account of the philatelic aspects, I refer readers to the Peru Philatelic Study Circle (PPSC) website on Yahoo.com for a presentation by Richard Abrams entitled Philately of the War of the Pacific.

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The Inca Khipu



The Inca developed the khipu as an elaborate counting system, which was in use from 1200 AD to 1533 AD. This photo was taken by the editor at the Larco Museum in Lima.


Origins of the Triangle Overprints

Charles Wooster

It is standard knowledge that when Peru regained control of their postal facilities following the end of the War of the Pacific, they immediately created a triangle overprint to validate the remaining stocks of postage stamps. This action was done because they thought that postage stamps had been illegally removed from the offices and may yet be used as postage, defrauding the Post Office department of future revenues. However, the basis for this suspicion seems to have been lost over the past 130 years.

Recently, I obtained a PDF of a philatelic journal, *Guia Del Coleccionista De Sellos De Correos*, that was published in Valparaiso, Chile, between 1878 and 1884. It was part of the Earl of Crawford collection of philatelic literature, which was recently digitized. In the June 1884 issue,¹ there is a story about how the editor had recently purchased a batch of 50,000 Peruvian stamps. The editor initially thought that he had discovered a new variety of the 10-centavos deficit stamp of 1874 because these were brown in color and not the original yellow. Shortly after that, a military friend who had been in Callao during the war brought him some stamps that he had removed from the Peruvian customs house in Callao. These contained both yellow and brown copies of the 10-centavos deficit stamp, and he quickly determined that the color changelings were caused by exposure to light or humidity and were not a new variety.

This likely was not the only instance of theft, but it may be the only surviving documentation that such thefts took place. It certainly justified the Peruvian's decision to validate their remaining inventories. Below is a copy of the article, along with my English translation.

44	GUIA DEL COLECCIONISTA DE SELLOS DE CORREO.
<p>El mismo sello, pero sin perforar, lo poseo cortado al medio en la forma que se ve al margen y usado como valor de medio real.</p>	lor. Poco despues, un amigo militar, y que hizo la campaña al Perú, en su estadia del Callao tuvo ocasion de apoderarse de un pequeño lote de estampillas que encontró en un húmedo rincon de la Aduana y acordándose de mi aflecion por los sellos me remitió la «presa de guerra» Encontré entre estos algunos de los «Deficit» 10 cts. que eran morenos, mientras que habia otros que tenian solo parte del sello de ese color y el resto era amarillo.
<p>PERÚ.</p> <p>En una partida de 50,000 sellos peruanos que hace algunos meses compré, venian unos euantos del tipo «Deficit» de 10 cts. que en vez de ser amarillos, su color orijinal, eran morenos. Al principio creí hacer un hallazgo feliz de alguna rareza... y guardé con cuidado los pocos sellos de este raro co-</p> 	<p>Quedó así descifrado el enigma del color moreno, producido por humedad, gases o talvez por los rayos de un sol abrasador.</p> <p>Para otra vez mas.</p> <p>ENR. CONR. EBERHARDT.</p>

In a batch of 50,000 Peruvian stamps that I bought a few months ago, there were a few of the deficit type of 10-cts. that instead of being yellow, their original color, they were brown. At first, I thought I would

¹ Guia Del Coleccionista De Sellos De Correos, Ano VII, No. 78, Valparaiso, Junio de 1884, page 44

make a happy discovery of some oddity ... and I carefully kept the few stamps of this rare color. Shortly after that, a military friend, who participated in the campaign to Peru, in his stay in Callao, had the opportunity to seize a small batch of stamps that he found in a humid corner of the Customs House and remembering my affection for the stamps sent me the “prizes of war.” I found among these some of the Deficit 10 cts. that they were brown, while others had only part of the stamp of that color, and the rest was yellow.

It was thus deciphered the enigma of the brown color, was produced by humidity, gases or perhaps by the rays of a scorching sun.

Identification of the Triangle Overprints

Newer Peru philatelic enthusiasts will face a challenge identifying the 11 types of triangle overprints. The following information may help. This information was gathered from several sources.

Type	Corner of Triangle	Bottom Rectangle	Dots on Left Side*	Dots on Right Side*
I	Closed	Open	4 above, 3 below	4 above, 3 below
II	Closed	Open	4 above, 5 below	4 above, 5 below
III	Open	Open	3 above, 4 below	3 on each side, Top dot veers outward
IV	Closed	Open	3 above, 4 below	3 above, 4 below
V	Closed	Closed & Solid	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 4 below
VI	Closed	Closed & Solid	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 3 below
VII	Open	Horizontal lines	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 3 below
VIII	Open	Open, broken on the right	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 3 below
IX	Open	Open	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 3 below
X	Open	Faulty horizontal lines	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 3 below
XI	Open	Open	3 above, 3 below	3 above, 3 below

Type	Dots on Triangle base*	Center of Sun	Ray Number	Word PERU
I	4 dots on each side	One ray ends into the center	16	Nothing distinctive
II	4 dots on each side	A small circle in the center	14	Small arc on “P”, closer to sun
III	3 dots right, 4 left	Nothing distinctive	16	Leg of “R” is straight
IV	3 dots on right, 4 left	Most rays extend into the center	15	Closer to sun than other types
V	4 dots on each side	Nothing distinctive	16	“P” has large arc
VI	4 dots on each side	Rays vary in shape	16	“P” has small arc
VII	3 dots on each side	Rays appear as exclamation mark	16	Leg of “R” is short
VIII	3 dots on each side	Center appears as cross	16	“P” seems to lean to right
IX	3 dots on each side	Lacks detail, may be solid	16	Leg of “R” is rounded
X	3 dots on each side	Indistinct	16	Compressed
XI	3 dots on each side	Irregular	16	Leg of “R” straight and short

*Dots on the left side and dots on the right side of the triangle refer to the number of dots above and below the rectangle in the center. Similarly, the dots on the triangle base refer to the number of dots on each side of the rectangle in the triangle base.

If possible, determine the postmark date on the stamp. The dies were ordered on the following dates, so if a postmark is before 28 September 1886, the variety cannot be types IX, X or XI. This information is from *The Mainsheet*, Volume 4, page 46, available from the American Philatelic Society library.

Date of Invoice for Die	Corresponding Triangles
9 November 1883	I and V
29 December 1883	II and III
22 July 1884	IV and VI
25 July 1885	VI and VIII
28 September 1886	IX and X
7 April 1896	XI

Number of Overprints and Tips on Spotting Forgeries

Willem de Gelder

I asked Mr. Willem de Gelder, an authority on the triangles, if he knew the number of printings of each of the eleven types. He sent me the following e-mail.

Factual and numeric information on the triangle overprints is scarce in general. What we do know is this:

- (a) There are indeed eleven different types. Commonly numbered from 'Type I' thru 'Type XI.'
- (b) Types IX, X and XI do not exist on the ordinary postage stamps, only on the deficit stamps, except for type IX in red on the 1ct green with additional horseshoe overprint.
- (c) Types I and II do not exist on the deficit stamps with no further overprint. They only exist on the deficit stamps with additional 'Plata Lima' overprint, with exception of the 20ct blue (only type IV on this one).

The frequency of each type differs per stamp. Numeric information I do not have. Only some indications. For instance: on the 1ct yellow with no further overprint, the types VII and VIII are the most common. However, on the deficit stamps, type IX is the most common. Type I is usually difficult on any stamp.

Also, be aware that some types are very similar. So it might be that you think you have type 'Y', while at detailed revision, it turns out to be type 'Z'. When you have seen thousands of triangle overprints literally as I do, in 90% of the cases, you spot the differences in one glance. But for the less trained eye, a mistake is easily made. It is not uncommon for me to buy triangle overprints with the type jotted down on the backside, which are clearly incorrectly classified. The couples that are frequently interchanged are:

- Types II and IV
- Types III, VIII and X
- Types V and VI

Retouches Likely

The background of these 'look-a-likes' is that most probably, there were never eleven different triangle overprint devices, but retouches to existing devices were made. Following this theory, type IV is a retouched

type II, etc. The retouch process changed the characteristics of the triangle, thus producing eleven different types, however leaving intact some general characteristics which lead to confusion.

A Note on Forgeries

Also, be aware of forgeries. I estimate that on the market, at least 30% to 40% of all triangle overprints is forged, and in case of errors (inverted, rotated or double triangle overprints), the percentage is above 90%. Personally, I always divide the forgeries into three types: (a) too silly, (b) too nice and (c) too dangerous. Group (a) consists of forgeries that won't convince anyone unless you've never seen a Peruvian triangle overprint in your entire life. Group (b) consists of forgeries that are clearly the product of machine-aided design; they are too perfect for a handcraft made device as the real triangle overprints were the case. The forgeries that can easily fool us are in group (c). I think this last group of forgeries, in most cases, is made via a photo-mechanic process based on original overprints. These forgeries usually show all the details of the original overprint types, but as your eye gets trained over the years, your gut feeling tells you that something is wrong. These forgeries usually show the characteristics of 'photocopies of photocopies of photocopies.' I suppose you still have known the time we were making photocopies of documents or images, instead of printing or scanning. When you made photocopies of photocopies of photocopies, you saw the image getting distorted slowly: sharp edges got rounded, straight lines got a little bubbly, very fine white spots got filled with ink, shades of grey started to appear, etc. That is exactly what I see in a lot of forgeries of group (c). Hence my theory of forgery via a photo-mechanic process.

The triangle overprints of Peru caught me some years ago, and I can get pretty passionate about them. I have a PowerPoint presentation with detailed classification information on each type. Be aware it is in Spanish, and it has a lot of images, so it is a pretty heavy document.

Kind regards,
Willem de Gelder

Note that Mr. de Gelder's PowerPoint presentation mentioned above follows on page 19.]

Additional Notes Regarding the Triangles

Unique Features of Each Triangle Type.

Type I: Only type with double interior frame lines

Type II: Only type with 14 rays on the sun

Type III: Top dot on right side veers outward, and letter R of "PERU" is straight

Type IV: Only type with 15 rays on the sun

Type V: Large arc on letter "P" of Peru is very round

Type VI: Combination of solid rectangles and small arc on letter "P" of Peru

Type VII: Rays of the sun are broken to appear as exclamation marks, with dot towards the outside

Type VIII: Letter "P" of Peru leans to the right, towards the letter "E"

Type IX: Leg of the letter "R" in Peru is significantly more round

Type X: No easily distinguished unique features, but word "PERU" is more compressed

Type XI: Elaborate floral tips on all three angles of the triangle

Issues Made for Collectors

Some sources mention that various overprints were made for collectors only. The Scott catalog states, “the 1c green, 2c dark violet and 20c brown-red, overprinted with triangle, are fancy varieties made for sale to collectors and never placed in regular use.”

If anyone has more information on the stamps made for collectors only, please contact the editor.

More on Forgeries

[Editor’s Notes: Forgeries can be challenging to spot, and Mr. de Gelder states above. Some, presumably those in groups (a) and (b), can more easily be found by measuring. I adapted the following from The Mainsheet, Volume 4.]

Not to be surprised with overprints from the 19th Century, forgeries of the triangles exist on genuine stamps. The easiest way to determine a forged overprint is by its dimensions. Many forged triangle overprints are larger than the genuine overprints, measuring 18mm wide at the base and 16.5 mm high. Other distinguishing features may be more challenging to identify as a forgery.

Features of many forgeries include:

- Each side and the base have three dots on above and below the rectangle, as do several genuine overprints,
- The rectangles are solid, and
- There are 16 rays of the sun,
- The center of the sun is clear and open.

Comparing the features mentioned above (3 dots, solid rectangles and 16 rays) with the spreadsheet or with Mr. Willem de Gelder’s illustrations in this issue, the forgeries do not meet all of the criteria of any other specific type. The table below lists the deterministic characteristics of each type and the forgeries. The yellow cells match the forgery’s features. Note that no genuine type has the entire row yellow as the forgeries do.

Comparison of the Features of the Eleven Types and Forgeries

Type	3 Dots on Sides and Base	Solid Rectangles	Number of Rays on Sun
I	No	No	16
II	No	No	14
III	No	No	16
IV	No	No	15
V	No	Yes	16
VI	No	Yes	16
VII	Yes	No	16
VIII	Yes	No	16
IX	Yes	No	16
X	Yes	No	16
XI	Yes	No	16
Forgery	Yes	Yes	16

For many decades, triangle overprints have been classified into eleven different types. It has not always been this way: the oldest catalog in Peru distinguishes only four types, which are the four basic types (the Michel and Gibbons catalog uses these four types to this day)

These types appeared in chronological order (see page 12), so it seems that over time different dyes were manufactured, or retouches made.

Three colors of ink were used: black, blue-black and red for the overprints. Blue-black ink has its origin in the fact that an oily substance was added to the black ink buffer for drying purposes. Blue-black ink is only seen on stamps with triangle types I and II.

The red ink was used only in a few cases, one of which seems to have been a color test to see how a red ink stamp would appear on the blue 5-cts with the horseshoe.

The fastest way to recognize a type II is by combining the circle in the middle of the sun, the small arc of the letter 'P' in 'PERU' and the position of the word 'PERU' between the sun and the frame.

Generally, type IV is easily detected by the position of the word "PERU" near the sun and by the large space between the two points to the extreme left of the base, even in copies with heavy cancellations.

Solid rectangular dots and blocks, in combination with the small arc of the letter P make the type VI triangle easy to recognize.

The status of the 1-ct green and 2-cts dark violet stamps with triangle reseal type VI is not clear; can be genuine unissued or can be made 'on demand'. They only exist unused.

The letter 'P' in type VIII gives the impression of leaning to the right. Actually, the 'P' is fatter lower and becomes thinner higher, giving the impression of being tilted.

The compression of the word 'PERU' in Type X is very noticeable, even in specimens with a heavy cancel.

Type X's dye at some point fell into the hands of others, according to a testimony by René Gastelumendi in the magazine Filatelia Peruana in 1961. There are stamps with triangle type X that according to the catalogs should not exist and where you can see that the bowl is very worn and in bad condition. They are specimens that have been resealed by individuals who improperly disposed of the file.

It seems that type XI has been used for a relatively short period, as it almost always has a clean and sharp impression. The fine line of the dots within the frame is the most characteristic feature.

Translation of the Triangle Presentation

Due to formatting restrictions, the presentation with illustrations follows these translations.

Type I

- 1) Closed angles
- 2) Double interior frame (exists only in type I)
- 3) 16-ray sun, one ending in the center
- 4) On the sides four points above and three points below the rectangular block
- 5) Rectangular blocks attached to the inner frame
- 6) At the base four points on each side of the rectangular block.

Type II

- 1) Closed angles
- 2) The only triangle where the sun has only 14 rays; also, a small circle in the center
- 3) The letter P of Peru has a small arch
- 4) On both sides four points above and five points below the rectangular block
- 5) The word Peru is noticeably closer to the sun than the frame
- 6) At the base four points on both sides of the rectangular block

Type III

- 1) Open angles
- 2) Sun has 16 rays
- 3) On the left side there are 3 points above and four points below the rectangular block
- 4) The right leg of the letter 'R' is straight
- 5) The dotted line in the upper right frame veers outward
- 6) On the right side three points above and three below the rectangular block
- 7) At the base three points to the right and four points to the left of the rectangular block
- 8) The line of points at the base have a rounding down

Type IV

- 1) Angles closed
- 2) The only triangle where the sun has 15 rays; the rays touch each other in the center
- 3) At the base, between the two points to the far left is a small point; sometimes that dot is not shown, and there is a blank space
- 4) On both sides three points up and four under the rectangular block
- 5) The word 'PERU' is notoriously closer to the sun than to the frame
- 6) At the base three points to the right and four to the left of the rectangular block

Type V

- 1) Angles closed
- 2) Rectangular blocks on all three sides are solid
- 3) The letter 'P' of 'PERU' has a very large arch covering more than half the stick
- 4) On the right side three points up and four below the block rectangular; left three dots up and down
- 5) On the extreme right side of the base of the inner frame you see traces of double frame; that makes you think type V is a type I touch-up
- 6) At the base four points on both sides of the rectangular block

TYPE VI

- 1) Angles closed
- 2) Rectangular blocks on all three sides are solid
- 3) The outer frame is broken at the height of the basis of the word 'PERU'
- 4) The letter 'P' of 'PERU' has a small arc that touches the inner frame and is broken where it reaches the inner frame
- 5) On both sides three points on both sides of the rectangular blocks
- 6) The dots on the sides of the rectangular blocks are actually square
- 7) At the base four points on both sides of the rectangular block

Type VII

- 1) Open angles
- 2) The sun has 16 rays
- 3) On all three sides of the triangle there are three points on either side of the rectangular block
- 4) The rectangular block at the base is faulty and is shaped like two horizontal lines
- 5) (Almost) all the sun's rays have a break near the outer end, which gives them the shape of an exclamation point
- 6) Breaks in the sun's rays form a perfect circle
- 7) The right leg of the letter 'R' is short and doesn't come to the base

Type VIII

- 1) Open angles
- 2) The center of the sun has an open space that is shaped like a cross
- 3) The letter 'P' gives the impression of leaning towards the right
- 4) The rectangular block of the base has an opening on the right side
- 5) In fairly worn highlights, the dot line on the upper right shows a detour outward
- 6) On all three sides there are three points to both sides of the rectangular block
- 7) The letter 'R' is quite compressed and has a short right leg, which doesn't get to the base of the letter

Type IX

- 1) Open angles
- 2) The sun has 16 rays
- 3) On all three sides there are three dots on both sides of the rectangular blocks
- 4) The right leg of the letter 'R' is round and comes out of the frame of the letter

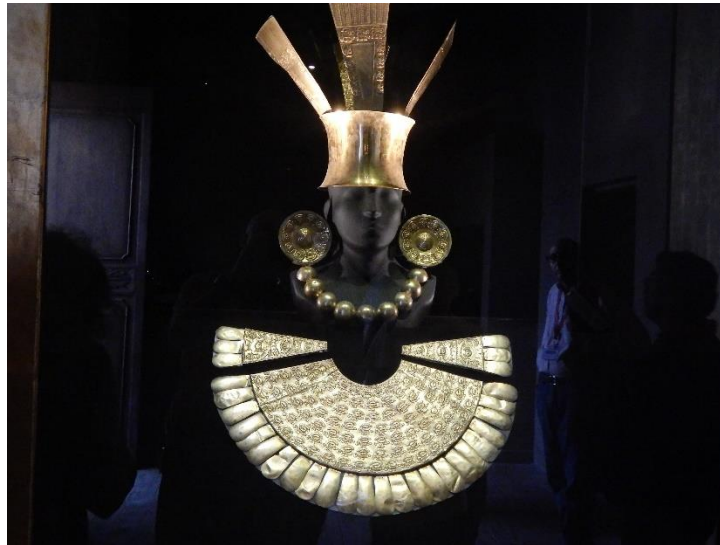
Type X

- 1) Open angles
- 2) The word 'PERU' is quite compressed
- 3) On all three sides there are three dots on both sides of the rectangular blocks
- 4) The rectangular block at the base is faulty and is shaped like two horizontal lines

Type XI

- 1) Open angles, ending in well-crafted vases
- 2) Rectangular blocks and the dots on the sides form a single fine line
- 3) The letter 'R' has a straight and slightly short right leg

Chimu Gold Funerary Offering, 1300 AD-1532 AD



The Chimu were considered the greatest metalworkers of ancient Peru. It expresses all the great splendor of the power enjoyed by the ruler who wore it. The plumes represent the birds, the only creatures able to approach the sun. This interpretation is from the Larco Museum in Lima. Photo taken by the editor.

The Detailed Illustrated Classification of Each Triangle Type A PowerPoint presentation by Willem de Gelder

Mr. de Gelder's presentation is in Spanish. A translation of the text appears above, on pages 16-19, presented before the illustrations due to format requirements. The presentation is on a wider paper size, possibly A4. If you choose to print the document on standard 8 1/2 x 11 paper, some text may be cut off. I was able to get an acceptable print on legal (8 1/2 x 14) paper, which can be trimmed to 8 1/2 by 11 with almost no side margins.

Tipo I

1) Ángulos cerrados

2) Doble marco interior
(existe solamente en tipo I)

3) Sol de 16 rayos, uno
terminando en el centro

4) En los lados cuatro
puntos encima y tres
puntos debajo del
bloque rectangular

5) Los bloques rectangulares
unidos al marco interior

6) En la base cuatro
puntos a cada lado
del bloque rectangular

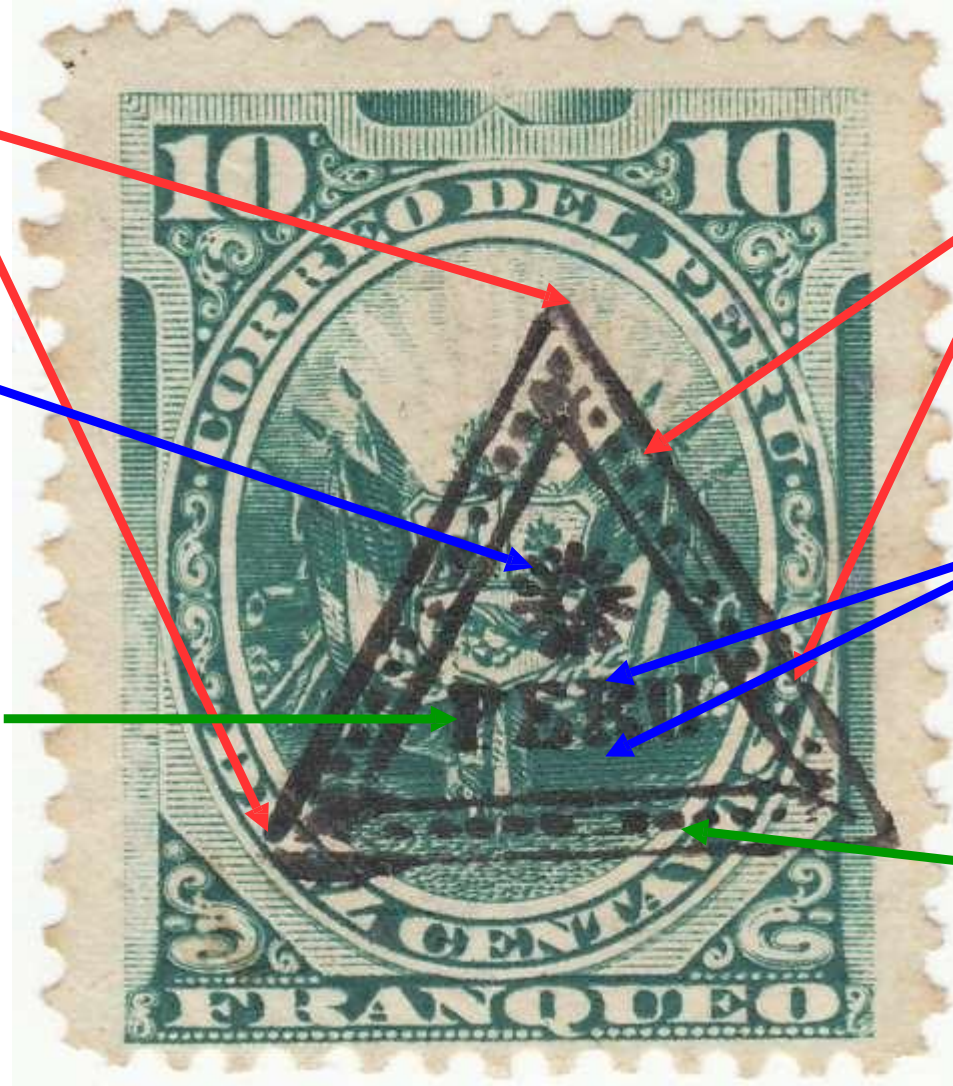


Tipo II

1) Ángulos cerrados

2) El único triángulo donde el sol tiene solamente 14 rayos; además un pequeño círculo en el centro

3) La letra 'P' de 'PERU' tiene un arco muy pequeño



4) En ambos lados cuatro puntos encima y cinco puntos debajo del bloque rectangular

5) La palabra 'PERU' se encuentra notoriamente más cerca al sol que al marco

6) En la base cuatro puntos a ambos lados del bloque rectangular

Tipo III

1) Ángulos abiertos

2) El sol tiene 16 rayos

3) Al lado izquierdo tres puntos encima y cuatro debajo del bloque rectangular

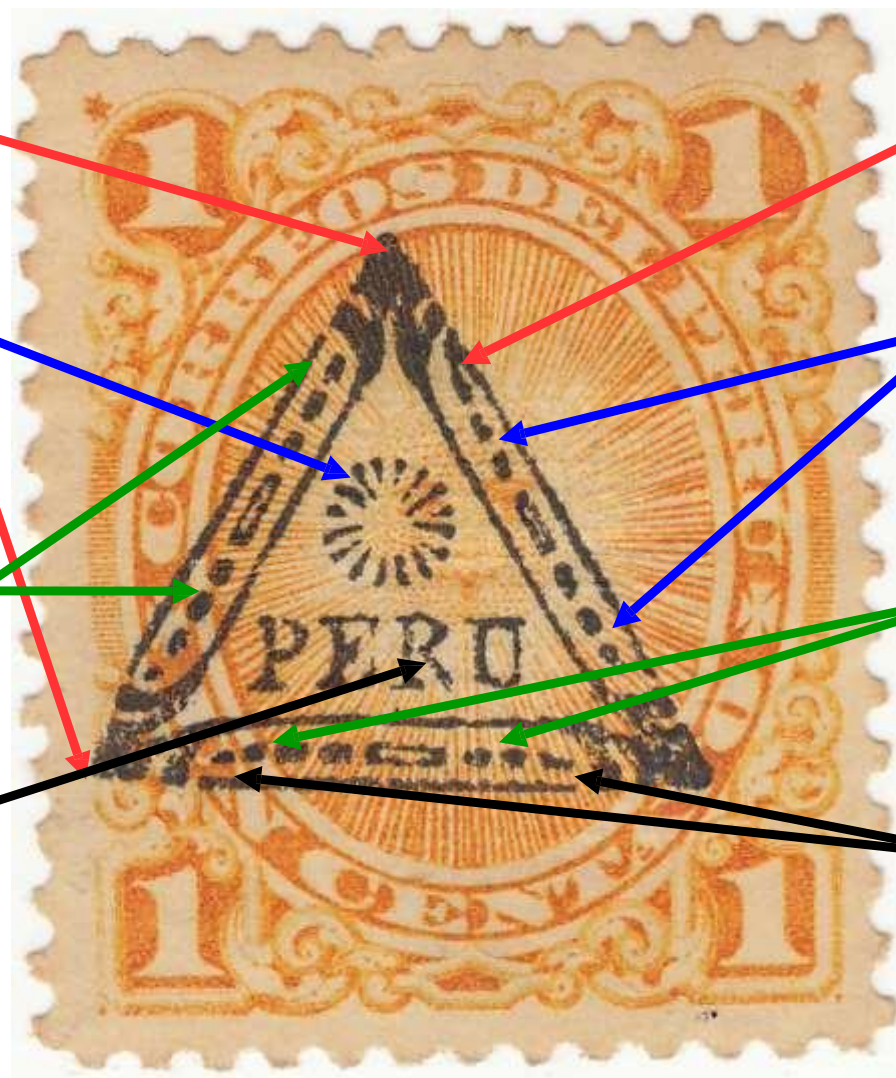
4) La pata derecha de la letra 'R' está recta y no sobresale del marco de la letra

5) La línea de puntos en el marco derecho superior se desvía hacia afuera

6) Al lado derecho tres puntos encima y tres debajo del bloque rectangular

7) En la base tres puntos a la derecha y cuatro puntos a la izquierda del bloque rectangular

8) La línea de puntos en la base tienen un redondeo hacia abajo

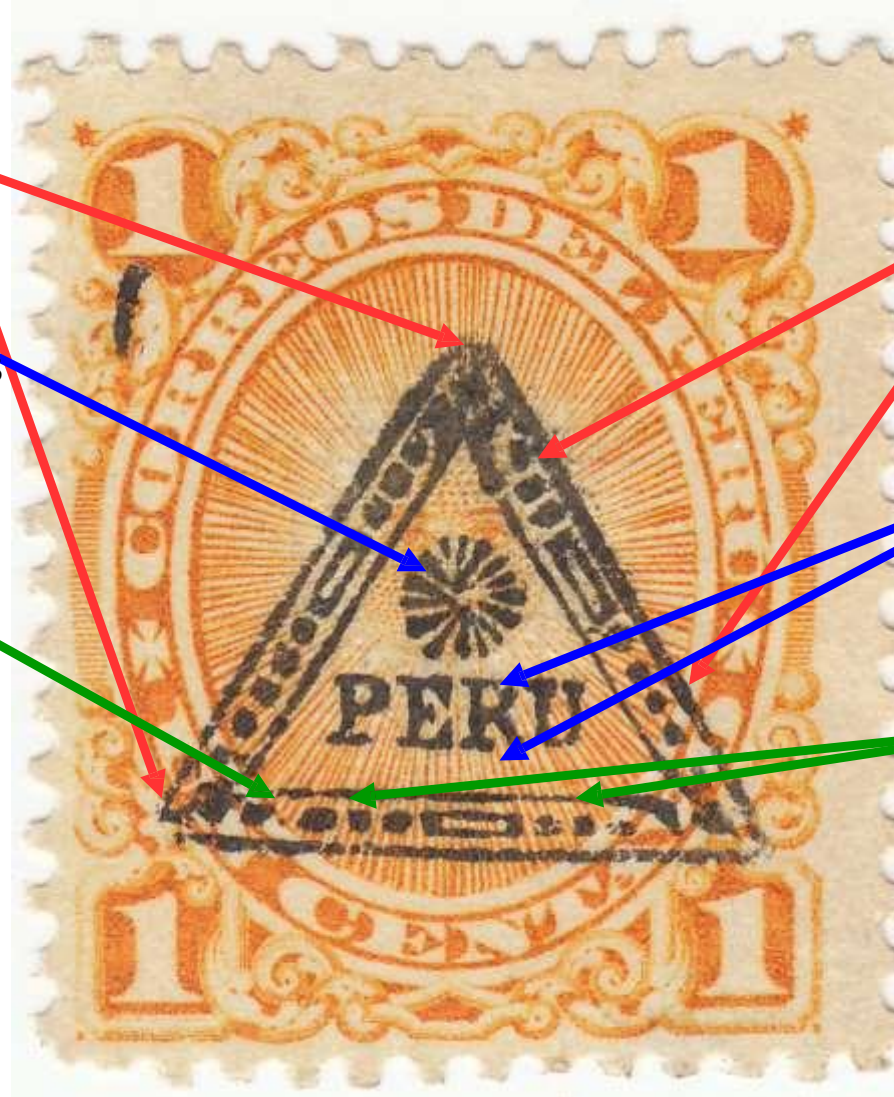


Tipo IV

1) Ángulos cerrados

2) El único triángulo donde el sol tiene 15 rayos; los rayos se tocan en el centro

3) En la base, entre los dos puntos a la extrema izquierda se encuentra un pequeño punto; a veces ese puntito no se muestra, pero si hay un espacio en blanco



4) En los dos lados tres puntos arriba y cuatro debajo del bloque rectangular

5) La palabra 'PERU' se encuentra notoriamente más cerca al sol que al marco

6) En la base tres puntos a la derecha y cuatro a la izquierda del bloque rectangular

Tipo V

1) Ángulos cerrados

2) Los bloques rectangulares en los tres lados son macizos

3) La letra 'P' de 'PERU' tiene un arco muy grande que abarca más de la mitad del palo



4) Al lado derecho tres puntos arriba y cuatro debajo del bloque rectangular; a la izquierda tres puntos arriba y debajo

5) En el lado derecho extremo de la base del marco interior se ve rastros de doble marco; eso hace pensar que el tipo V es un retoque del tipo I

6) En la base cuatro puntos a ambos lados del bloque rectangular

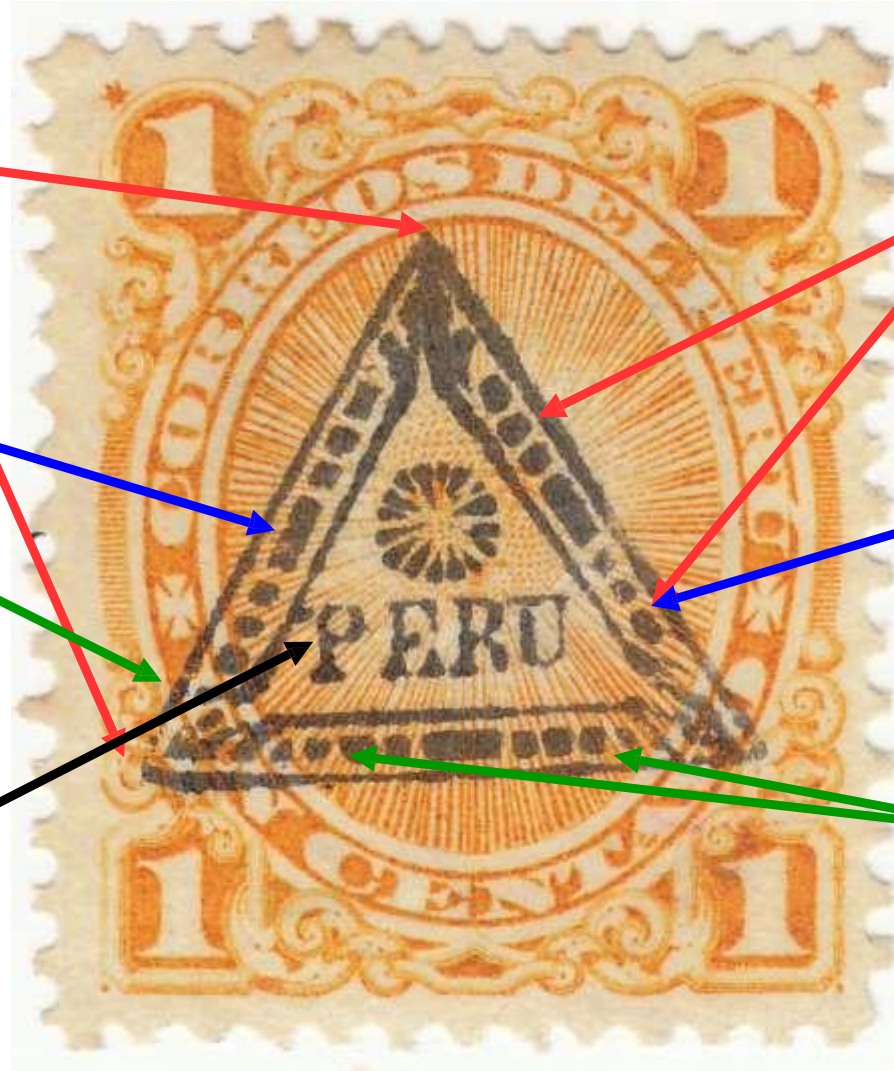
Tipo VI

1) Ángulos cerrados

2) Los bloques rectangulares en los tres lados son macizos

3) El marco exterior está quebrado a la altura de la base de la palabra 'PERU'

4) La letra 'P' de 'PERU' tiene un arco pequeño que toca el marco interior y está quebrado donde llega al marco interior



5) A los dos costados tres puntos a ambos lados de los bloques rectangulares

6) Los puntos a los lados de los bloques rectangulares en realidad son cuadraditos

7) En la base cuatro puntos a ambos lados del bloque rectangular

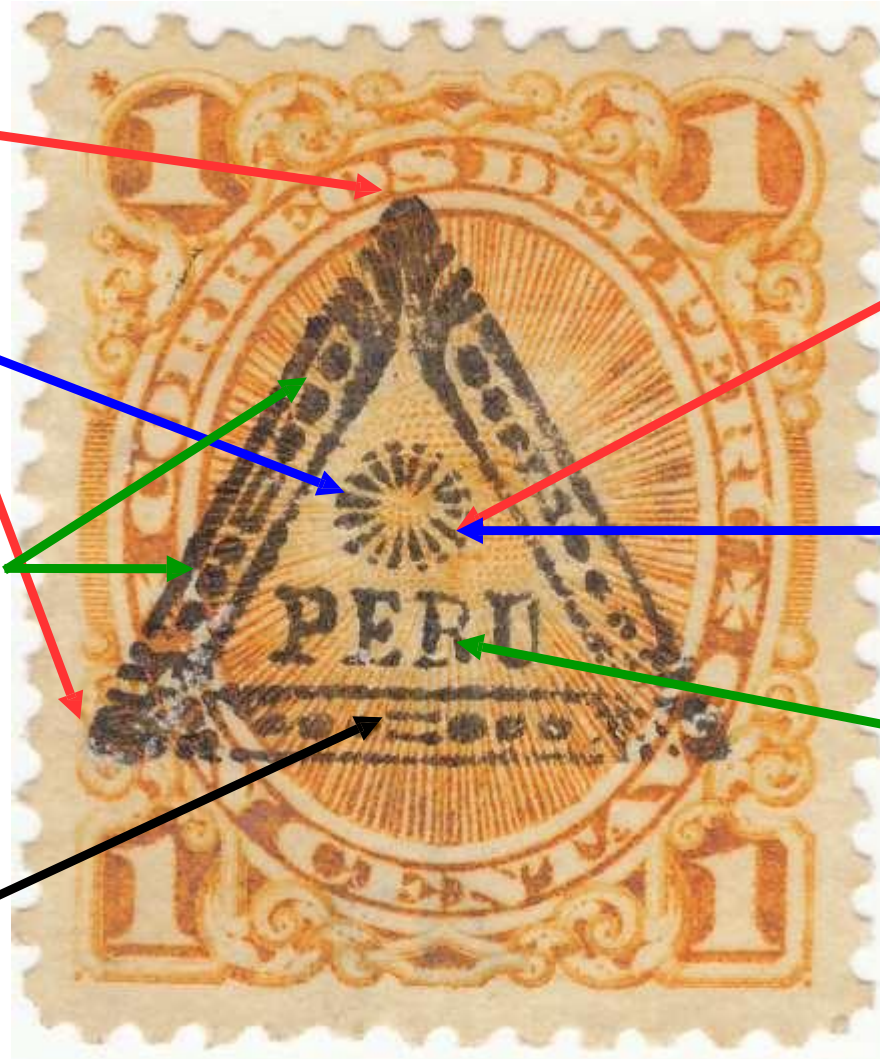
Tipo VII

1) Ángulos abiertos

2) El sol tiene 16 rayos

3) A los tres lados del triángulo hay tres puntos a ambos lados del bloque rectangular

4) El bloque rectangular en la base es defectuoso y tiene la forma de dos líneas horizontales



5) (Casi) todos los rayos del sol tienen una rotura cerca al extremo externo, que les da la forma de un signo de exclamación

6) Las roturas en los rayos del sol forman un círculo perfecto

7) La pata derecha de la letra 'R' es corta y no llega hasta la base de la letra

Tipo VIII

1) Ángulos abiertos

2) El centro del sol tiene un espacio abierto que tiene forma de cruz

3) La letra 'P' da la impresión de inclinarse hacia la derecha

4) El bloque rectangular de la base tiene una apertura al lado derecho



5) En resellos bastante gastados, la línea de puntos de la derecha superior muestra un desvío hacia afuera

6) En los tres lados hay tres puntos a ambos lados del bloque rectangular

7) La letra 'R' es bastante comprimida y tiene la pata derecha corta, que no llega hasta la base de la letra

Tipo IX

1) Ángulos abiertos

2) El sol tiene 16 rayos

3) A los tres lados hay tres puntos a ambos lados de los bloques rectangulares

4) La pata derecha de la letra 'R' es redonda y sale fuera del marco de la letra



Tipo X

1) Ángulos abiertos

2) La palabra 'PERU' está bastante comprimida

3) A los tres lados hay tres puntos a ambos lados de los bloques rectangulares

4) El bloque rectangular en la base es defectuoso y tiene la forma de dos líneas horizontales



Tipo XI

1) Ángulos abiertos, que terminen en florones bien elaborados



2) Los bloques rectangulares y los puntos a los costados forman una sola línea fina

3) La letra 'R' tiene la pata derecha recta y ligeramente corta