

the "politics" played in philately's organizational structure, with the result that they have withdrawn from any participation in philatelic societies and events, in some cases even given up collecting. They had become fed up with the aggravations which are the result of the activities of the politicians, interfering with the enjoyment of our hobby. The politicians, working behind the scenes and also forcing their way into organizations as directors or board members, have their hand in distributing offices, including the selection of judges of stamp shows, in giving philatelic awards and in all other activities in which philatelic "prominence" can be promoted. First of all, the politicians help each other to climb up on the ladder of philatelic "prominence", secondly they promote their friends who are doing them favors. They will oppose everyone who does not want to play politics with them, and they will discriminate against any philatelist who does not go along with their ideas of how an organization or a show should be run and to whom philatelic awards should be given. These politicians have no real philatelic deeds to their credit, and they do not care whether someone is a good and knowledgeable philatelist or not; they do not appreciate real philatelic achievements and therefore do not consider them at all. They are opportunists who will get another politician to be the president of a society or institution

because he will play ball with them and further their plans. The long list of mediocre or inferior philatelists who were in this way pushed into prominent philatelic positions bears witness to the activities of the politicians. In the selection of the judges of philatelic shows, the politicians also promote their men, excluding, under various pretexts, much more knowledgeable philatelists whom they do not favor. The lists of the winners of philatelic awards are also filled with the names of mediocre philatelists, while many of those really deserving such awards are kept out by the politicians who will always favor a good politician before a good philatelist. It is not surprising that under these circumstances, many of the best philatelists will never run for office in a philatelic organization and will never want to be nominated for a philatelic award. They know that they have no chance against the politicians, and they want to avoid aggravation which spoils the fun of collecting stamps. Despite all politicians, these independent philatelists are and will remain the good core of our hobby which will survive the petty machinations of those for whom philately is only a stepladder to an artificial "prominence". These independent philatelists are the champions of "Happy Stamp Collecting", showing the way to enjoyment of philately by ignoring the meddling philatelic politicians.

EUROPEAN CLASSICS

XXIII. ITALY

The Kingdom of *Italy* of the classic stamp period — *Italia* in the language of its population — was created by a revolutionary movement and confirmed by an act of the first Italian parliament on February 18, 1861. King Vittorio Emanuele II of Sardinia was proclaimed King of Italy on March 17, 1861. The new kingdom incorporated, with Sardinia as the dominant power, the former Austrian province of Lombardy, the Old Italian States of Modena, Parma, Tuscany and Two Sicilies (Naples and Sicily), as well as a large part of the Roman States, including the Romagna. It comprised the whole Italian peninsula, extending from the Alps into the Mediterranean, for the time being excluding only Venetia, which was still under Austrian rule, as well as the

balance of the Roman States (districts of Rome, Velletri, Viterbo, Civitavecchia and Frosinone), which had remained under the temporal rule of the Pope. The tiny Republic of San Marino, an enclave in the former territory of the Roman States (Romagna), remained independent. The territory of the new Italy covered 96,500 square miles, with a population of about 23 million people in 1861. In 1866, Venetia was incorporated and eventually, in 1870, also the balance of the Roman States, bringing the territory of Italy to 110,600 square miles and the population to over 27 million in 1871. On land, the now completely united kingdom bordered to the northwest on France, to the north on Switzerland and to the northeast on Austria. The Adriatic Sea washed its eastern shores, the Tyrrhenian Sea its western ones, with

the large islands of Sicily situated at its southern promontory and Sardinia north of it. A considerable number of small islands also belong to Italy, the largest one being Elba on the west coast. The capital was first *Torino* (Turin), the former capital of Sardinia. It was transferred to *Firenze* (Florence) in 1865 and, after the liberation, to *Roma* (Rome) in 1871, at that time a city of 226,000 inhabitants.

The unification of Italy proceeded at a rather fast pace. During a period of two years, Sardinia, which formed the nucleus, either acquired the territories by war (Lombardy, 1859), or, by popular uprisings, provisional governments were created (in Modena, Parma and Tuscany in 1859, in Naples and Sicily in 1860); these governments voted to make the states parts of the new kingdom, which decision was in most cases confirmed by popular vote. In 1859 and 1860, a large part of the Roman States (Romagna, Umbria and Marche) denounced the rule of the Pope and also voted to join the new kingdom. When the Kingdom of Italy was established in 1861 under the leadership of King Vittorio Emanuele II of the house of Savoy, its foremost goal was complete unification. This was accomplished in less than ten years. In 1866, Italy joined Prussia in the war against Austria, which, through the good offices of Emperor Napoleon III of France, led to the acquisition of Venetia, although the war itself was rather unlucky for the Italian forces. Italy took possession of Venetia on October 19, 1866; a plebiscite on October 21 and 22, 1866 decided for union with Italy with only a few no-votes. The remnants of the Roman States were protected by French troops and several attempts to liberate the territory failed. Although the French troops were withdrawn in 1866, the pontifical forces under French command remained strong. Only during the Franco-Prussian War, when France had other worries, did Italian troops occupy the territory and on September 20, 1870, they entered Rome, ending the temporal rule of the Pope. King Vittorio Emanuele II now ruled the united kingdom as a constitutional monarch with the help of a parliament which was elected by popular vote.

The *Postal History* of Italy is a very colorful one, due to the union of a number of territories with different postal systems, partly even different currencies. The task of

unification of the postal service took almost two years and only on January 1, 1863 did uniform postal regulations for the entire territory of the kingdom come into force, based on a new postal law of May 5, 1862. Before that, the territories had been gradually taken over by the Sardo-Italian postal administration. A general Postal Administration (Direzione Generale delle Poste) was created in 1861, which was part of the Ministry of Public Works (Ministro dei Lavori Pubblici). The country was divided into postal directorates (Compartimenti Postali) which supervised the post offices in their territory. The post offices (Uffici Postali) were divided into three classes, according to the volume of mail they handled. When the kingdom was created in 1861, there were about 1800 post offices, of which around half were in Sardinia and the other half in the newly acquired provinces. On May 1, 1866, this figure had risen to about 2450, of which 28 were first class post offices, 160 second class and the balance third class post offices. In 1870, after the incorporation of Venetia and the balance of the Roman States, there were about 2900 post offices in Italy. In addition to these post offices, a large number of rural letter collecting agencies (Collectorie Rurale) were established — in 1864, more than 1400 existed — which augmented the service of the post offices and were subordinated to them. In 1862 there existed about a dozen travelling post offices on railroads; their number had risen to 28 in 1866. There were several post offices on board of ships, on two North Italian Lakes (Lago di Garda and Lago di Como) as well as on ships connecting various Italian ports and from Palermo to Malta.

By a treaty concluded on March 22, 1862, Italy provided postal service for the Republic of *San Marino*. A letter collecting agency, subordinated to the post office at Rimini, was established there in 1862, which in 1864 was elevated to the status of a post office. On *foreign soil*, Italy had three post offices during the classic stamp period. The first one, *Tunis*, was inherited from Sardinia, the second, at *Alexandria* (Egypt), was opened on March 1, 1863, the third, at *Tripoli* (Barberia), in January 1869.

Of *foreign countries*, only *Switzerland* had postal establishments on Italian soil. They were mainly in border towns along the

common border, but in some cases also farther inland. These Swiss postal agencies did not accept letter mail and handled only parcels for shipment to or through Switzerland. Under Sardinian rule, there were three such postal agencies, at Camerlata, Domodossola and Luino. Twenty more were established in the following years, namely at Arona, Baveno, Chiavenna and Vogogna in 1861, at Campodolcino and Ornavasso in 1862, at Iselle and Stresa in 1864, at Bellano, Lecco, Milano, Monte Spluga, Varenna and Varese in 1868, as well as at Bellagio, Bormio Borgo, Grossoto, Morbegno, Sondrio and Tirano in 1869. At the end of the classic stamp period in 1870, 23 Swiss postal agencies were operating in Italy.

In regard to its *Currency*, Italy adhered to the Latin monetary convention, which was based on the Goldfranc, of which the *Lira* was the Italian counterpart. One Lira (L) was divided into 100 Centesimi (c). This had been the currency of Sardinia and it was introduced in all Italy on January 1, 1862, except in the Neapolitan Provinces. The various states had gradually adopted the Sardinian currency shortly after they had established provisional regimes or had accepted Sardinian sovereignty. Only in the Neapolitan Provinces were there difficulties in the conversion procedure, so that the Grana currency of Naples (1 Ducat = 10 Carlini = 100 Grana = 200 Tornese) remained in use and was replaced by the Lire currency only on October 1, 1862. The rate of exchange was 1 Grana equivalent to 4.2c, but in the postal service, 1 Grana was figured as 4c and 1 Tornese as 2c to make the figuring easier. — For *Weights* and *Distances*, the metric system was used.

Italy established the government *monopoly* of its postal service by the Postal Law of May 5, 1862, which abolished all private mail services. Until then, several non-postal mail services had existed, the most important one being that of the railroads in Tuscany which ceased only in 1862.

For the purpose of this monograph, we have to restrict the *classic stamp period* rather arbitrarily. As a number of stamps issued in 1870 and later were in use for many years after the classic stamp period — the postage due stamps of 1870 even deep into the 20th century, to 1934 — it was necessary to limit the classic stamp period to all stamps issued before 1870, although the

last classic issue of postage stamps, that of 1863, was replaced by a new issue only in 1879. Therefore, we had to exclude the 10c and 20c color changes of 1877, the 2c provisionals of the same year, the 1870 postage due stamps as well as the official stamps of 1875, although they belong in some respects to the period with which we deal.

In a number of aspects, the Kingdom of Italy was a successor to the Kingdom of Sardinia, taking over its organization and extending it to the entire peninsular. This was especially true in regard to the Postal Service and in particular to the *Postal Stamps*. When the new kingdom was created, it simply took over the facilities of the Sardinian postal service, including the Sardinian postal stamps, which in this way, from the day of the formal proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy on February 18, 1861, became the first postal stamps of the new kingdom. They were *Postage Stamps* in the denominations 5c, 10c, 20c, 40c, 80c and 3L, as well as *Newspaper Stamps* of 1c and 2c. They had no name of the country in their design and they became the postal stamps of Italy until they were replaced by a new issue, which was the case for the postage stamps on December 1, 1863. The Sardinian stamps were issued imperforate and it is a pure accident that the trials to issue perforated stamps were concluded only after the creation of Italy and that therefore the perforated Sardinia stamps were the first stamps issued immediately for all Italy. But they were only a temporary issue and only four denomination were issued perforated for several months, while the two other denominations remained imperforate all the time and a return to imperforate stamps took place for the other denominations after a few months. When the 2c newspaper stamp changed its color in 1862, the old Sardinian design remained unchanged; when a new denomination of 15c became necessary in 1863, it was issued exactly in the design of the Sardinian stamps. Only a few months later it was replaced by a stamp in a new design which included for the first time an indication of the new country's name. As we will deal with the stamps of Sardinia under that country and the imperforate stamps issued after February 18, 1861 can be distinguished from the earlier ones only by their shades and by their paper, partly

also by their print, we will refrain from dealing with the first imperforate stamps here and refer in regard to them to the monograph of Sardinia to be published at a later date. We will, for the purpose of this monograph, recognize only those kinds of stamps which were issued for the first time after February 18, 1861.

The Sardinian stamps were gradually introduced in most parts of Italy already before the unification. In Lombardy, they were introduced early in July 1859; the definitive use in other parts usually started after a period of temporary provisional use. In Modena, Parma, Romagna and part of the Roman States, Sardinian stamps were definitively introduced on February 1, 1860. Only after the unification did the definitive use of Sardinian, now Italian stamps start in Sicily, namely on May 1, 1861, in Tuscany on January 1, 1862 and in the Neapolitan Provinces on October 1, 1862. In Venetia, Italian stamps were introduced in the second half of August, 1866, in the balance of the Roman States in the second half of September, 1870.

The Neapolitan Provinces first had a special position, due to the different currency in use there. A separate issue, similar to that of Sardinia, but with value indication in Grana currency, was in use there from February 1861 to September 30, 1862. Although these stamps were originally issued by a provisional government, they are actually stamps of the Italian postal administration and therefore stamps of Italy. But for technical reasons, we prefer to deal with them together with the stamps of Naples and must refer to the monograph of that country, which will be published at a later date, for further details.

The first stamps issued for the united Italy were the perforated *Postage Stamps* of Sardinia, early in *March 1862*. The first *Newspaper Stamps* were issued on *May 1, 1862* and *Postage Due Stamps* were introduced on *January 1, 1863*. No other kind of stamps and no postal stationery was in use during the classic stamp period.

The first *Postal Rates* schedule of Italy was that adopted by Sardinia in 1859. The domestic letter rate was 20c to 20 grams, 10c for each additional 10 grams up to 50 grams, then 50c for each additional 50 grams. Printed matter paid 2c for each 40 grams, but newspapers mailed by publishers 1c

for each 20 grams. Registration fee was 30c. There were exceptions to alleviate hardships in several former states, but for letters within these states only. A reduced letter fee of 10c for 20 grams was charged for letters up to 25km distance in Modena, Parma, Romagna, Sicily and Tuscany. For the Neapolitan Provinces, special reduced rates in Grana currency were established and paid with special stamps in Grana currency (see Naples). When regular Italian stamps were introduced there on October 1, 1862, the single letter rate was set at 10c within the province and at 20c to other parts of Italy. There was a general surtax of 10c for domestic mail carried by foreign ships between Italian ports. By the postal law of May 5, 1862, which came into force on January 1, 1863, uniform postal rates were established for all Italy. Domestic letters now paid 15c for each 10 grams up to 50 grams, then 15c for each additional 50 grams. City letters paid only 5c and military personnel including non-commissioned officers only 10c per 10 grams. Printed matter now paid 2c for each 40 grams, while for newspapers and magazines, mailed by the publishers, a reduced rate of 1c for 40 grams was charged. Samples paid 20c up to 40 grams and 40c up to 500 grams. Registration fee was 30c. For money orders, the fee was 10c for each 10 Lire up to 50 Lire and 10c for each 50 Lire over 50 Lire; military personnel paid only half of these fees. These rates remained valid to the end of the classic stamp period, except that as of January 1, 1865, the letter rate was increased from 15c to 20c. — For mail to foreign countries, the rates were rather diversified. The single letter rate to Austria was 40c, 55c and 65c respectively, depending on the distance, to France 50c, to Southern Germany and England 60c. To and from the post offices abroad, the letter rates were 40c and 60c.

The *denominations* of the stamps covered the various rates. The original Sardinian issue consisted of postage stamps of 5c, 10c, 20c, 40c, 80c and 3 Lire, which were now used everywhere in Italy and of which all except the first and last were temporarily issued perforated in 1862. When the uniform postal rates were established on January 1, 1863, a 15c postage stamp was issued the same day and the 20c denomination withdrawn from further sale. When the first definitive issue was introduced on December

1, 1863, it consisted of eight denominations, namely 1c for newspapers and printed matter, replacing the 1c newspaper stamp, 5c for city letters, 10c for military letters and as additional denomination to pay higher rates, 15c for the single letter rate, 30c for the registration fee, 40c and 60c for foreign mail, and the 2 Lire for heavy letters. When the domestic letter rate was again increased on January 1, 1865, a new provisional 20c replaced the 15c on the same day and a definitive 20c stamp was issued late in April 1867. A 2c postage stamp was issued on March 1, 1865, replacing the 2c newspaper stamp. The denominations of the Sardinian newspaper stamps were 1c and 2c and these two were retained during the whole Italian classic stamp period, although these denominations became regular postage stamps in 1863 and 1865 respectively. A 10c postage due stamp was issued on January 1, 1863, to serve for postage due on city letters.

From the beginning, the payment of the postal fees was *obligatory* in Italy for all newspapers and printed matter as well as for the registration fee. Letters could be sent unpaid, but the addressees had to pay double rates for them. The use of stamps was made obligatory for all mail from January 1, 1863 on; until then postage could also be paid in cash at the same rates. The newspaper stamps were to be used only on newspapers and printed matter, but they were also occasionally used on letters and tolerated in such cases. Postage Due was generally paid in cash. The postage due stamps which were introduced on January 1, 1863, were to be used only for city mail. But they were also used for other mail, most frequently for letters from the Roman States which had no postal treaty with Italy, the latter charging the domestic letter rate of 20c for all letters arriving from there.

Italy usually *withdrew* stamps and *demonetized* them when they became unnecessary or were replaced by stamps in a new design or in a new color. The first stamp to be withdrawn was the 20c which was retired from the post offices on December 31, 1862 and demonetized on February 28, 1863. The other denominations of the first Sardo-Italian stamps, imperforate and perforated, as well as the two 15c stamps of 1863 were demonetized on December 31, 1863. Of the definitive stamps of 1863, the 15c was withdrawn on

December 31, 1864, but remained valid and was demonetized only together with the other denominations. The provisional 20c stamp of 1865 was demonetized on July 31, 1867. The 10c yellow brown was withdrawn on July 31, 1877 and demonetized on August 31, 1877. The other denominations of the set, 5c and higher, including the 20c of 1867, were demonetized on December 31, 1889, the 1c and 2c only on June 30, 1898.

At the *post offices abroad*, probably all denominations of the postage stamps (but no newspaper and postage due stamps) were in use, although not all of them are known so used.

The *design* of the first Italian stamps was, of course, identical with that of the last Sardinian stamps, showing the head of King Vittorio Emanuele II, facing to the right, in colorless embossing within the oval center of a rectangular frame. The inscriptions, colorless on colored ground, showed *FRANCO* at left, *BOLLO* at right and the value indication at top and bottom, for example *C. POSTE 20* at top and *C. VENTI* at bottom. As this did not indicate the country of origin, they were very suitable to serve also as the first Italian stamps. The same design was also used for the new 15c denomination, issued on January 1, 1863. But the large quantities needed of this denomination soon made it necessary to abolish the separate embossing and, only two months later, a new design was introduced for the 15c denomination, now showing the head of the king in colored print, facing to the left, in a simple rectangular frame. The inscriptions now were *FRANCO BOLLO* at left, *POSTALE* at top and *ITALIANO* at right, with the value indication *C. QUINDICI* at bottom. For the first time, the value indication "15 C" was repeated in figures in the corners. The definitive issue of 1863 again showed the head of the king, facing to the left, in an oval frame on horizontally lined ground, within a rectangle. The spandrels were filled with ornaments which were different for each denomination. The oval was inscribed *POSTE ITALIANE* at top and the value indication, for example *CINQUE CENTESIMI*, was inserted at bottom. These inscriptions were colorless on colored ground, except for the 2L, which showed them in colored letters. Again there was no value indication in figures. The 1c and 2c, which were to replace the newspaper stamps, had a richly orna-

mented numeral design in which POSTE was at top, ITALIANE at bottom and the value indication within the numeral. The provisional 20c on 15c had the old value indication obliterated by a curved line and "C" added in the top left and bottom right, "20" in the two other corners. The new 20c of 1867 had the head larger and in a rectangular frame, which had FCO BOLLO at left, POSTALE at top, ITALIANO at right and "20 Cent." at bottom. The newspaper stamps had a design similar to the first postage stamps, but the center oval was smaller and a numeral "1" or "2" instead of the head was embossed in the center. The inscriptions were colored here, FRANCO BOLLO at top, GIORNALI at left, STAMPE at right and the value indication, for example "CENT. UNO", at bottom. The design of the postage due stamps of 1863 was a rather primitive oblong oval with the value indication "10.C", colorless on colored ground, in the center, SEGNA above and TASSA below. The design of the postage due stamps of 1869 had "0.10" colorless in the center of an oblong oval with the inscription SEGNA TASSA at top and CENT. DIECI at bottom, all in an ornamented rectangular frame. — The definitive issue of 1863 was designed by the British artist Leonard C. Wyon. The origin of the design of the second 15c postage stamp and of both postage due stamps is unknown.

The second 15c postage stamp exists in two types, the second one being the result of an effort to improve the readability of the value indication. In the inscription at bottom, the original die (Type I) had the "C" almost closed, so that it often looked like an "O", and the "Q" was connected with the bottom frame line, which impaired its readability. Shortly after the new stamp was issued, these two letters were improved, the opening of the "C" was made more pronounced and the frame line was broken below the "Q" (Type II). The stamps in the new type were issued in the middle of May, 1863.

The 15c stamp of the definitive 1863 issue exists in three types, but two of them were used only for the 20c on 15c provisional of 1865 and were not issued without the overprint, while the third type comes without and with overprint. The creation of the types is directly connected with the fact that the 15c stamp was overprinted to increase its face value from 15c to 20c. To

make it impossible for fakers to imitate the overprint and in this way to cheat the post office of 5c for each stamp, the design of the 15c stamps was slightly changed before they were overprinted. In comparison to the original 15c stamp (Type I), the first overprinted stamps had four colorless dots added to the design, namely on both sides above and below the small ornament in the oval. This so-called 4-dot type (Type II) was that of the first issued stamps of the provisional issue of January 1, 1863. A short time later, the four dots were considered too inconspicuous and eight more were added, in the opening of both end pieces of the ornaments in each corner of the design. This created the so-called 12-dot type which appeared early in February 1865 (E. D. February 13, 1865). Eventually, to use up the remainders of the regular 15c stamps, these no-dot stamps also were overprinted and issued early in March 1865 (E. D. March 3, 1865). Although this last printing had no "secret" dots and therefore was easier to fake, no forgeries of the overprint to defraud the post office seem to have occurred.

The definitive issue of 1863 had an *underprint*, which consisted of crossed vertical wavy lines, with small diamond-shaped dots between the elevations of the crossing lines. This underprint was applied with a colorless or almost colorless chemical substance which gave the stamps a "greasy glaze" and was to prevent cleaning of the stamps. This was a British idea, in line with the many similar experiments and devices used for the stamps of Great Britain.

The first stamps of Italy were *manufactured* in the same way as the last issue of Sardinia, by the same printer, Francesco Matraire of Turin. This continued until 1863, when the manufacture of the first definitive issue was entrusted to Thomas De La Rue & Co. of London. This fact has greatly influenced the methods of manufacture of the Italian postage stamps. When, in 1865, a Government Printing Office (Officina Governativa delle Carte-Valori) was established in Turin, to take over the job of printing the postal stamps, the British example continued to be followed for many years to come and this influence is noticeable even in the 20th century products of the Italian Government Printing Office. The new 2c of 1865 and the overprint of the 20c provisional

of the same year were still printed in London. It is claimed that later printings of the 20c provisional were printed in Turin, but no details are known. Early in 1866, the Turin printing office started to print postage stamps, but the first printing of the 20c in the definitive design was made in London. Only in 1867 was the contract with De La Rue & Co. terminated, and from that time on, all Italian stamps were printed in Turin. All newspaper stamps were printed by Matraire until they were replaced by postage stamps in 1863 and 1865 respectively. Of the postage due stamps, the 1863 issue was printed by Matraire at Turin, the 1869 issue by the Government Printing Office at Turin.

Four different methods were used to produce the postage stamps. The Sardinia stamps of 1855 had the frame *typographed* and the center inserted in a second operation by *colorless embossing*. The same method was continued when these stamps became the first stamps of Italy in 1861. For the newspaper stamp in changed color of 1862, the same printing method was used. Of the new 15c denomination of 1863, the frame was *lithographed* and the center added by *colorless embossing*. The second 15c stamp was *lithographed* without embossing, as was the postage due stamp of 1863. All further stamps were *typographed*, namely the definitive issue of 1863, the overprint of the provisional 20c on 15c, the new 20c of 1867 and the postage due stamp of 1869.

For the first stamps, the same *Dies* were used as for the last issue of Sardinia. For the new 15c in the same design, a new frame was cut in steel. The design for the new lithographed 15c was drawn on a stone. When the bottom inscription of this stamp was improved by enlarging the opening of the "C" and interrupting the frame line below "Q" (Type II), only the first change was made on the die, while the second one was accomplished during the manufacture of the printing material. The head for the definitive issue of 1863 was cut in steel. This head was transferred to seven small steel plates, on which the frames of the seven values (all except 1c) were cut. These new dies were hardened and then used as original dies of the seven denominations. The numeral designs of the 1c and 2c were completely cut in steel. For the 20c of 1867, a new larger head and a new frame were cut in steel. The design of the postage due stamp

of 1863 was drawn on a stone, that of the 1869 issue cut in steel. — Francesco Matraire made the drawings on the stones. The head die of the definitive 1863 issue was made by the British engraver J. F. Joubert, that of the design of the 1869 postage due stamps by Lodovico Bigola of the Government Printing Office at Turin.

For the first stamps, the same *printing material* which had been used for the last Sardinia stamps was continued in use. For the postage stamps it consisted of typographed settings for the frames, composed of 50 single stereotypes mounted on wood, in ten rows of five. There was a single border line around each setting, at about 4 to 7mm distance, which was interrupted on the sides between the 4th and 7th row. It can be assumed that the settings were constant and the stereotypes in fixed position to each other, as the same characteristics and plate flaws can be found in all printings, imperforate and perforated, in the same position. For the 40c, for example, position 12 always shows a line around the design at $\frac{1}{2}$ mm distance. This can be found in all printings of the Sardinia stamps and on all perforated stamps. It is considered to be the impression of raised grates of the stereotype and can also be found — less complete, usually only in the corners — in other positions and on other denominations, especially the 20c. For the newspaper stamps — Sardinian ones as well as the new 2c in changed color — settings of 100 (10x10) stereotypes were used which had no border line. For the embossing, two kinds of dies were used, single dies or twin dies, the latter consisting of two dies side by side.

To obtain the printing material for the frame of the new 15c denomination, the die was transferred fifty times to a stone, so that a transfer block resulted consisting of fifty transfer types in ten rows of 5. The printing stone was made up of six such transfer blocks, in two rows of three. The vertical gutters were 40mm wide between the first and second transfer blocks and had the width of a stamp between the second and third transfer blocks. Several stones were used for the printings, all of them more or less profusely retouched to correct incomplete or otherwise unsatisfactory transfers. For the embossing of the heads, the same single and twin dies were employed for the 15c as for the other denominations.

Of the second 15c stamps, we know only about the printing material of the printings in Type II but not of those in Type I; it can be assumed that the methods of production were the same in both cases. From the original stone, a transfer block of 25 (5x5) was made. For Type II, the change of the "C" had been made in the die, but the interruption of the frame line below "Q" was made individually on all 25 designs of the transfer block, therefore varies slightly for each of the 25 transfer types. In position 9, the change was omitted, obviously by error, and the line below "Q" remained intact on that transfer type. To obtain the printing stone, first an intermediary stone was laid down, consisting of four transfer blocks (2x2), and this stone of 100 (10x10) transferred twice, side by side, so that the printing stone consisted of 200 designs in 10 rows of 20. There were several printing stones which were characterized by transfer flaws and retouches. Among the former, one of Type I, which shows the "C" completely closed, making it an "O", is remarkable, as well as one of Type II, having three dots in place of the last "I" of "QUINDICI". The variety of Type II without the break of the frame line below "Q" (position 9 of the transfer block) appears eight times on the printing stone, in positions 24, 29, 34, 39, 124, 129, 134 and 139.

The stone of the first postage due stamp was made in a way similar to that of the 15c postage stamp, with the help of a transfer block of 100 (10x10), which was transferred to the printing stone twice, side by side. Proof sheets show that originally there was no gutter in the stone, but a pair with 18mm gutter is known, so that later stones must have had a gutter between the two transfer blocks. The original stone had a thin line around the design and these lines show up in the transfer and printing stones as single or double dividing lines between the stamps. They are rather distinct on the first printings but disappear gradually on later ones.

The first printing plates of the definitive issue of 1863, as well as of the new 20c of 1867, were made at London, the later ones, beginning in 1867, at Turin, probably by the same methods. Of the die, matrices were embossed in lead and a setting assembled which consisted of 100 such matrices (10x10). Electrotyped plates were made from these

settings and four of them (2x2) put together to form the printing plate of 400 designs. There were vertical and horizontal gutters in the width or height of a stamp respectively, just as can be found on the contemporary stamps of Great Britain. The system of extensive margin inscriptions was also adopted from the British stamps. A plate of 400 had "IL FOGLIO DI 400 FRANCOBOLLI POSTALE VALE LIRE . ." at the top and, inverted, at the bottom margin. "IL MEZZO FOGLIO DI 200 FRANCOBOLLI POSTALI VALE LIRE . ." can be found twice in the horizontal gutter, the bottom inscription being inverted. The inscription "IL QUATTRO DI FOGLIO DI 100 FRANCOBOLLI POSTALI VALE LIRE . ." is applied twice in the vertical gutter between the top panes and twice in the vertical gutter between the bottom panes, in each case one running upwards and the other downwards. Finally, in the side margins, twice at left upwards and twice at right downwards, the denomination is stated, for example, FRANCOBOLLI POSTALI DA UN CENTESIMO. Furthermore, there are crosses above and below the 5th and 16th column, to serve as help for the perforating, as well as plate numbers and current numbers, exactly as used on the sheets of the stamps of Great Britain and its colonies. The plate numbers were figured for each denomination separately, therefore started for each with "1". They were negative figures in a circle, with an extra outside circle, and they were inserted in the margin inscriptions twice, in the top right and in the bottom left corner. The current numbers were a kind of order number and each plate of an issue received a number in rotation, also starting with "1". The first plates of the 1863 issue received the current numbers "1" to "9", which were in small rectangles with indented corners and which also were inserted twice in the margin inscriptions, in the top left and in the bottom right corner. At first, only one plate was made of each denomination, except for the 15c, which was the most needed one and for which two plates were made, with plate numbers "1" and "2" and current numbers "1" and "3". The first plates of the other denominations all had the plate number "1" and the current numbers "2"(1c), "4"(60c), "5"(30c), "6"(10c), "7"(40c), "8"(2L) and "9"(5c). When need arose, further plates were made, of course more

frequently for the most wanted denominations than for the others, for example 30 of the 15c. Late in 1865, the entire printing material was sent to Turin and from early in 1866, the London plates were used there for all necessary printings. The 15c, which had been replaced by a 20c, was only printed in London. From 1868 on, new printing material was manufactured at Turin, by the same methods as used at London. The features of the plates remained the same, except that for lettering of the margin inscriptions other types were used and that the current numbers now appear without frame.

For the underprint, a plate of 400 single electrotypes was assembled, to conform with the plates for the designs. It was used for the London as well as the Turin prints.

The overprint plates for the 20c on 15c provisional of 1865 consisted of 400 clichés, to fit the sheets of the stamps. In addition to the stamps, the margin print also was changed, in barring *QUINDICI* and putting a "20" after it, as well as changing in the same way the sales price of 100, 200 and 400 stamps from "15", "30" and "60" to "20", "40" and "80".

There exist no major plate varieties of the classic stamps of Italy, minor ones being more or less conspicuous plate flaws and, on the lithographed stamps, retouches of various kinds.

The *printing* of the first postage stamps, including the first 15c, and of all newspaper stamps was done in two operations. First, the frame was printed with the plates or stones of 50 (5x10) frames and then the heads or numerals were embossed in the centers. The embossing was done either singly or with the twin dies. In the latter case, as there were only five stamps in each row, one embossing fell on the left sheet margin, so that there was an additional column of 10 heads. But as the margins of the sheets were trimmed closely before delivery to the post offices, this fact is known only from remainder sheets. For the postage stamps, single and twin dies were used for the embossing of the 20c and 40c, while for the 10c and 80c predominantly or solely single dies were used.

The stamps come with many varieties of the embossing, but as far as they are unused they generally originate from printer's waste which was sold with the remainders and therefore are of little interest. Only double

Fig.
116



Fig.
117

embossings are rather common and can be found frequently in all denominations, unused and used; the 40c and 80c also exist with triple embossing, the 15c even with quadruple embossing. In used condition, as rare varieties 10c and 15c are known without embossing, and the 15c exists used with inverted embossing (Fig. 116). Of varieties of the frame, the only major one is a distinct double print of the 15c. Other slight and usually partial double prints of the frame are not caused by having run a sheet twice through the printing press, but are secondary offsets, for which the transferring medium was an embossing die. When the heads or numerals were embossed on sheets with still wet printing, the ink was partly transferred to the embossing die and deposited on the stamps embossed next, creating the impression of a double print. Such "double prints" are rather frequently found and deserve no particular price increase.

The first 15c stamp was printed from the stone of 300 in a peculiar manner, namely simultaneously on two half sheets, so that each received 150 stamps. As the two sheets sometimes did not fit exactly or overlapped slightly, we can find sheets which show traces of an eleventh row or have small parts of the designs of the top or bottom margin row omitted. Later, printings on full sheets of paper were made, so that sheets of 300 stamps also exist which were found in the remainders.

Of the second 15c, slight double prints, resulting from shifts during the printing, are known but seem of little importance. A used copy of Type II, printed on both sides, is known as the only major printing variety of this stamp.

Of the definitive 1863 issue, including the 20c of 1867, the printings can be divided into three groups, namely London Prints, Turin Prints from London plates, and Turin Prints from Turin plates. But it is actually impossible to distinguish these three groups as far as single stamps off cover are concerned. Only the specialist who concentrates on this issue will be able to do so for some

stamps, but never for all, by considering dated cancellations, shades and underprint. The latter is practically invisible on the Turin prints, while it sometimes shows more distinctly as a yellowish tint on the London prints. Copies which have the underprint on the back of the stamps have also been reported, which would indicate that the underprint was applied to the sheets before they were gummed. Of major printing varieties, the 2c is known in double prints, but they were used long after the end of the classic stamp period and possibly come from stolen printer's waste, never having been issued by a post office.

The provisional 20c on 15c stamp was manufactured first by overprinting two types of the 15c stamp which were not issued without overprint (Type II and III) and then also on the regular 15c stamp (Type I). Type III (12 dots) is known also without overprint but only unused and must be considered an unissued variety (Fig. 117). Types I and III are known with double overprint, Type III also with inverted overprint, all used only. Type III also exists with strongly shifted overprint, while Type I is known with the top line of the overprint omitted, probably an accidental variety due to a turned sheet corner.

No printing varieties of importance are reported of the postage due stamps of 1863 and 1869.

The *Paper* of the first stamps was machine made wove paper. It was rather uniform and no varieties of any importance have been reported. For the definitive issue of 1863 and for the postage due stamp of 1869, a watermarked machine-made paper was used. It shows the Royal crown on each of the 400 stamps of the sheet. It is upright on the postage stamps and sideways on the postage due stamps. In addition, each pane has a margin watermark, FRANCO BOLLI POSTALE at top and, inverted, at bottom, as well as MINISTERO DELLE FINANZE on the sides, upwards at left and downwards at right. At the sides, there was also a cross in the middle. This paper was first manufactured by the Turkey Mills of Maidstone, England, since 1866 by the Italian mills of Fratelli Avondo. The watermark rolls were supplied by J. Smith & Son of London and were used in England as well as in Italy. The paper was gummed before the designs were printed. The watermark exists more or

less shifted, resulting in split crowns and, on margin stamps, parts of the margin watermark on the stamps. In extreme cases, stamps without any watermark resulted; such unwatermarked copies are reported of the 2c. We have no reports of any classic stamps of Italy with inverted watermark.

The *color scheme* used for the stamps of Sardinia was continued for those of Italy. Of the postage stamps, the 5c was *green*, the 10c *yellow brown*, the 20c *blue*, the 40c *red*, the 80c *yellow* and the 3L *bronze*. When a 15c replaced the 20c, it took over its blue color. In the definitive issue of 1863, the 5c (now slate green), 10c, 15c and 40c retained their basic colors. Of the new denominations, the 30c was *dark brown*, the 60c *lilac* and the 2L *vermilion*. When the 15c was again replaced by a 20c, the new denomination took over the blue color of the former. Of the Sardinian newspaper stamps, both denominations were *black*, which led to frequent mistakes. This was the reason that on May 1, 1862 the color of the 2c was changed to *yellow brown*. When regular postage stamps replaced the newspaper stamps on December 1, 1863 and March 1, 1865, respectively, their colors were *gray green* for the 1c and *brown* for the 2c. The color of the 10c postage due stamps was the same as that of the contemporary 10c postage stamps, namely *yellow brown*.

The *colors* of all stamps, as far as they were printed by F. Matraire, vary very much, as it seems that the printer made no effort to achieve uniform colors. Of the first issue, the 10c comes in a great number of shades, running from brown to bistre, with olive and orange tints, the 20c runs in all shades of blue from indigo to light blue, the 40c is rose to carmine and the 80c yellow, with pale and orange shades. The 2c newspaper stamp is brown to yellow in a great variety of shades, especially bistre ones. The first 15c runs through the same shades of blue as the 20c stamp which it replaced, while the second 15c shows less variety, from dark to light blue. The definitive 1863 issue, as long as it was printed in London, did not have too many variations, which became more marked for the Turin printings. The 1c exists in many shades from olive to bronze green, the 2c runs from orange brown to dark brown, partly with reddish shades, the 5c was greenish gray with little variation, the 10c yellow brown with ochre, buff and

orange brown shades, the 15c light blue to dark blue, with indigo and grayish shades, the 30c shows a rather small range of brown shades, the 40c was rose with more or less pale and bright shades, the 60c lilac, which was rather uniform, and the 2L scarlet with little variations. The 20c on 15c provisional showed the same shades as the unoverprinted 15c, but in addition greenish, ultramarine and turquoise ones. The overprint was black brown without any major shades. The definitive 20c of 1867 was light to deep blue, with violet and greenish tints. Very diversified were the shades of the first postage due stamp, which exists in many shades from a dark ochre over a light brown to orange yellow and dark yellow. The color of the 10c postage due of 1869 was a rather uniform yellow brown.

The gum of the early stamps was a vegetable gum and was applied by hand by the Turin printer. It was thin and colorless. From the first 15c on, the stamps had a different gum which was thicker and less soluble, probably being an animal glue. This is especially apparent on the first 10c postage due stamp. On the London-printed definitive issue of 1863, the gum has the same characteristics as that of the contemporary stamps of Great Britain. It was a mixture of dextrin and animal glue which was applied by hand with brushes. It penetrated the paper and made it somewhat transparent and brittle. Generally, the paper was gummy after the underprint was applied, but before the designs were printed.

The Sardinian stamps had all been issued *imperforate*, but trials for a suitable separation device had already been made before the Kingdom of Italy came into being. The first perforation device was constructed by Matraire, copying a French device, and was rather crude. It was a horizontal comb perforating device, applying a perforation $11\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ (12x14 perfs). Eleven operations would have been necessary to perforate a sheet of 50 completely, but for reasons of economy, the last operation, which would have provided the bottom perforation of the last row of stamps, was always omitted. Therefore, the perforated sheets generally show no perforation between the bottom row of stamps and the bottom sheet margin. As an exception, when sheets were put in the device in inverted position, there is no perforation between the top row and the

top sheet margin, but this is much rarer. After the perforation procedure, the sheet margins were cut rather close to the perforation, so that usually only about 1mm margin was left; only at bottom, where there was no perforation (or at top, if this was the case), a margin of 10 to 12mm remained. The first perforated stamps were supposedly issued on March 1, 1862; as earliest date, March 3 is known for the 20c. The 10c followed later in the same month, the 40c in June 1862 and the 80c early in October, 1862. The 5c and 3L were never issued perforated and continued to be sold by the post offices in imperforate condition. But there were difficulties in the perforating process, partly due to the primitive perforation device and lack of experience, so that the printer was unable to supply the requested quantities. This resulted after a few months in abandoning of the perforation; further printings of all values, in the second half of 1862 and all of 1863, were again issued imperforate. The new 15c denomination in both designs was also issued imperforate only. The newspaper stamps were never perforated and the same was the case with the 1863 issue of postage dues. Only when the new definitive issue of 1863 was introduced did perforating again come into its rights; that issue, as well as the 1869 postage due stamps, were issued perforated only. The perforation was first applied by the British Government Printing Office at Somerset House in London and was identical with the contemporary perforation of the stamps of Great Britain which was applied by the same institution. It was a horizontal comb perforation 14 (14x17 perfs). There can be no doubt that the same devices which perforated the British stamps of that time were used, after being adapted to the different size of the sheets of the Italian stamps. In 1866, the same kind of perforation devices was acquired in England and established at Turin; from then on, all stamps were perforated in Turin. The perforations of London and Turin were exactly the same and cannot be distinguished.

Of the first stamps, a number of *Perforation Varieties* are known. Double perforation is recorded for all four denominations and triple perforation for 10c, 40c and 80c. The double or triple perforations show on three sides or only on one side of a stamp, as is characteristic for a comb perforation.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

When the perforating device stopped one row too early, vertical pairs resulted of which the top stamp is imperforate at bottom while the bottom stamp is imperforate all around. Such pairs are recorded of 10c, 20c and 40c. Most of these perforation varieties are known unused only and were found among the remainders. Of the 1863 issue, all denominations, including the 20c of 1867 and the 10c postage due stamp of 1869 are known imperforate, but they are considered proofs. Only in few cases did imperforate sheets, or sheets which had remained partly imperforate, reach post offices and were used up. This is known for the 1c, 2c, 15c and 30c, as well as for the provisional 20c on 15c (Type I, without dots). The 60c is also reported used in imperforate condition, but this seems doubtful. Double perforation is known of the 1c and the 20c provisional (Type III, with 12 dots). The 20c of 1867 is known in a bottom margin copy without perforation at bottom. Freak perforations, due to turned-over sheet corners, also are known.

The first issue of postage stamps was sold in sheets of 50 as printed. The two 15c stamps were also sold in panes of 50, the printed sheets being divided before delivery to the post offices. The definitive issue of 1863 was sold in panes of 100, as was the case with the 20c on 15c provisional, as well as the definitive 20c of 1867. The newspaper stamps were sold in panes of 50, the printed sheets being divided; from 1863, they were sold in sheets of 100 as printed. The first postage due stamps were also issued in panes of 50, later in such of 100, the printed sheets being divided in both cases. The 10c postage due stamps of 1869 reached the post offices in panes of 100, the printed sheets being divided, as was the case for the contemporary postage stamps. Of almost all stamps of which the printed sheets were divided before being sent to the post offices, full sheets as printed are also known; they were found in the remainders and never issued in such condition.

(To be continued)

OUR OFFICE will be closed from June 29 to July 18, 1959. No business will be transacted and no mail answered during this period.

● The next issue of the *MERCURY STAMP JOURNAL* is scheduled for September 1959.

● This year's Alfred F. Lichtenstein Memorial Award was given to Cornelius W. Wickersham, who has just published a book about the early issues of Venezuela. Wickersham, who had a distinguished career as a soldier — he retired as a Lieutenant General — and as a lawyer, was chairman of the board of judges of the FIPEX 1956.

● *INTERPOSTA 1959*, the International Philatelic Exhibition organized at Hamburg, which will be held from May 22 to 31, 1959, celebrating the centenary of the first stamps of Hamburg and Lubeck, has published its *Second Prospectus*. All indications point to the *INTERPOSTA* being the major philatelic event of the year, with 3500 yards of exhibition frames and a great number of visitors not only from all parts of Europe, but also from other continents; we estimate that there will be at least a hundred visitors from the Western Hemisphere. Four large exhibition buildings will harbor about 600 collections, another hall is dedicated to the various meetings and congresses held during the show. The prospectus also lists the many entertainments provided for the visitors. A large part of the prospectus is dedicated to publicity for travel in Germany.

● *SICILIA 1959*, the International Philatelic Exhibition scheduled at Palermo from October 16 to 26, 1959, which will celebrate the centenary of the first stamps of Sicily, has published its *First Prospectus*. The exhibition will be held as part of the Mediterranean Fair, in a large exhibition hall and several smaller buildings. Rules and regulations are published and other pertinent information is provided in the prospectus which shows that the exhibition is well organized and promises to be an important philatelic event.

● The European Schedule of our partners, Herbert J. Bloch and Edwin Mueller, is now definitely established. They will visit the following places (mail addresses are given in parentheses): London (May 19 to 21, Savoy Hotel); Hamburg (May 21 to June 1, Hotel Reichshof); Hanover (June 1 and 2), Wiesbaden (June 2 to 4, Hotel Nassauer Hof), Munich (June 4 to 7, Hotel Vier

EUROPEAN CLASSICS

XXIII. ITALY*

There existed considerable *remainders* of the first issue, but most of the sheets were imperforate and therefore are actually Sardinian stamps. Only small quantities of perforated stamps were among the remainders. They were sold in 1869 to a stamp dealer together with unfinished sheets and printer's waste. Many of the latter were misused for the manufacture of various fakes. There were small remainders of the first 15c as well as of the 10c postage due stamp of 1863, mostly ungummed printer's waste, and of the 2c newspaper stamp, but rather large quantities of the second 15c postage stamp. They were sold partly with the other remainders, but also retained by the postal administration to be sold by the philatelic agency, the supplies lasting into the twenties of the 20th century. The definitive issue of 1863, the provisional and definitive 20c as well as the 10c postage due stamp of 1869 were used up, and no remainders existed of 5c, 10c, 15c and 40c, 20c on 15c, 20c of 1867 and 10c postage due stamps. Of the 1c, 2c, 30c, 60c and 2L a rather large quantity of sheets was returned by post offices when they were withdrawn; later they were sold, together with small quantities of other denominations, by the philatelic agency of the postal administration. Accordingly, all classic stamps of Italy are available in *unused* copies without much difficulty, although fine copies with gum are driven up in price by a great demand for such material from Italy. Some stamps are much scarcer with original gum than without, because a large part of the remainders, especially of the early issues, were ungummed. This is especially true for the first 10c postage due stamp, of which most unused copies come from covers on which they remained uncancelled. *Unused multiples* are rather easy to obtain of the 20c and 80c of 1862, of the second 15c (Type II), of the 1c, 2c, 30c, 60c and 2L, of 1863, and of the 2c newspaper stamp of 1862. Multiples are scarcer of the 40c of 1862, of the first 15c, of 5c, 10c, 15c and 40c of 1863, of the 20c on 15c, Type I and III, of the 20c of 1867, as well as of the first 10c postage due stamp (the last without gum only). Rare in unused multiples are

the 10c of 1862, the second 15c in Type I, the 20c on 15c in Type II, the first 10c postage due stamp with gum and the 10c postage due stamp of 1869.

In *used* condition, most classic stamps of Italy are plentiful except for the 10c, 40c and 80c of 1862, and the 10c postage due stamp of 1863. But in *used multiples*, many of these stamps are rare and very rare. In used blocks of 4, all four values of the 1862 stamps belong to the latter category, as do both 15c, especially the first one, and the first 10c postage due stamp. But all others also are scarce or rare in used blocks, the least scarce ones being the lower values of the 1863 issue — of which 1c, 2c, 5c and 10c as well as the 20c of 1867 are rather frequently found in used blocks — and the 2c newspaper stamp. Except for a pair of the 2c newspaper stamp, no used multiples showing a gutter are known.

On *entires*, there are no rarities among the classic stamps of Italy, and almost all are available with the normal premium. Scarce on cover are only the 80c of 1862, the 2L of 1863 and the 10c postage due stamp of 1863, the last one only when cancelled by a postmark, because uncancelled on cover it can be found rather frequently. The stamps of the 1863 issue are sought on *entires* dated 1863, 1864 or 1865, because such stamps must be London prints. Such covers sell for several times the price of covers dated 1866 and later.

Combination frankings between the first issue and the 1863 issue are rather scarce, as they were valid simultaneously only for one month. Frankings containing imperforate (Sardinia) and perforated (Italy) stamps of the first issue are common, which is not surprising as both kinds were in use concurrently. *Mixed frankings* between stamps of Italy and those of the former Italian States were possible in a few cases. Some are known, but they are all very rare. In the Neapolitan Provinces, mixed frankings were possible only between October 1 and 15, 1862, and naturally only a few covers with such frankings are known. In Venetia, when it became Italian in 1866, no period of grace was given to the Austrian stamps, and therefore no mixed frankings are recorded. When Rome and the balance of the Roman States

*Continued and concluded from page 42.

became Italian in September 1870, Italian stamps were introduced on September 24, 1870 but are known used there already two days earlier. As the Roman States stamps remained valid until December 31, 1870, mixed frankings were possible for more than three months, but nevertheless few are known, and they are very rare.

A special chapter are letters from the Roman States to Italy between 1862 and 1870. No postal treaty existed and Italy did not recognize the Roman States frankings, but collected postage due on all mail from the Roman States. First regular postage stamps, later postage due stamps were used to collect the postage due and pasted on such letters, often covering the Roman States stamps; 20c was collected in this manner from the addressee for each single letter from the Roman States.

Letters mailed at the Italian post office at Alexandria (Egypt) often show a 1pi stamp of Egypt used together with the Italian stamps. Such Egyptian stamps covered the domestic rate from the Egyptian post offices to the Italian post office at Alexandria. They were usually cancelled by the Egyptian post office where the letter was mailed, while the Italian stamps, although often already pasted on by the senders, were cancelled by the Italian post office at Alexandria.

A number of *emergency frankings* is known. Newspaper stamps were rather often used for postage on letters, which was not permitted but tolerated. Especially early in 1863, the new 15c rate was paid by seven 2c and one 1c newspaper stamps. Postage due stamps were also occasionally used for the payment of postage; such examples are rare. Vice versa, the use of postage stamps for collecting postage due is known, mainly on letters from the Roman States. The use of bisected stamps was never permitted but obviously tolerated; only in February 1863 was this forbidden by a special decree. Known are of the 1862 issue the 10c, which is the least rare and was always vertically bisected, and the 40c, diagonally cut. Of the last one, only one example is recorded. Of the 1863 issue, only the 10c is known bisected, diagonally as well as vertically. Of the 2c newspaper stamp, a diagonal bisect, with a whole 2c used for a 3c rate, is known and considered unique.

Several classic stamps of Italy were also used on *publicity letter sheets*, which were sold at reduced prices to the public. Such sheets are known with the 5c of 1863 and the 20c of 1867; they were sold for 2½c and 15c respectively. The 2c of 1865 exists also on printed matter publicity sheets, which were sold for 1c; these stamps were perforated "C.1", which perforation also exists inverted. Such letter sheets are rare, unused as well as used.

The definitive 1863 issue, including the additional denominations, and the 20c provisional, as well as the 2c newspaper stamp of 1862, are also known overprinted or hand-stamped *SAGGIO*, which means "sample" and is the Italian equivalent of "Specimen". This was obviously also inspired by the British custom of overprinting sample stamps with SPECIMEN. The Italian SAGGIO stamps exist imperforate and perforated, the latter being scarcer. They were primarily pasted as samples on the decrees of issue which were sent to all post offices, but they were also used as gifts, especially to other postal administrations who wanted to exchange postal stamps. Some of these SAGGIO stamps are also known cancelled, and although one or the other copy may have slipped through for postage on mail, the cancelled copies are generally the result of trials for new cancellers.

The 1863 issue provides a challenge in regard to *condition*. The space between the stamps is so narrow that only on perfectly centered stamps the perforation does not cut the design. The slightest shift makes the stamps look off center. Perfectly centered stamps are very hard to find of the more valuable stamps and this difficulty is accentuated by the fact that due to the brittle paper many stamps have short perforations or rounded corners.

There exist *Reprints* of the first issue of Italy. In 1869 the printer Matraire sold the printing material of the Sardinia stamps to the stamp dealer Usigli of Florence, who in turn sold it in 1888 to the Berlin dealer David Cohn. As there were no plates for the frame of the 1855 issue among the printing material which Cohn had obtained, he used transfers made from the dies of the 1853 and 1854 issue of Sardinia, which had similar designs of the frames. With the help of these transfers, he laid down a stone of fifty frames of 5c, 20c and 40c — the three

values of which the 1853 and 1854 issues of Sardinia consisted — and printed sheets of 50 (10 rows of 5), the same size as the originals. Cohn had an original die for the embossing of the head; he did not use it singly but had a plate for 50 head embossings made to save work. The sheets of the reprints have no border line and the gum is smooth and thick; they are line perforated 12, which fact alone distinguishes them easily from the originals. The bottom margin of the sheets is always perforated. Cohn also manufactured various varieties of the three values — no reprints of the 10c and 80c exist — for example pairs, imperforate between; he also produced all three values with inverted embossing.

Not more dangerous than the reprints are *Forgeries*. Aside from crude picture book imitations, only the first 10c postage due was imitated to deceive the philatelists, but the forgery is not too well executed and therefore not dangerous. It is different for the various *Fakes*, some of which are rather well done products and therefore not so easy to spot. Of regular stamps, the imperforate Sardinia stamps received a faked perforation to simulate the much rarer first issue of Italy. Especially of the 10c, 40c and 80c, such fakes are plentiful and sometimes dangerous, but most of them have line perforation instead of comb perforation and the perforation does not measure $1\frac{1}{2} \times 12$. Proofs of the 15c, Type II (with 12 dots), also received a faked perforation, to be offered as the rare variety without overprint of the 20c on 15c. The Type I of the latter stamp is also known with faked inverted or double overprint. Numerous are the fakes of the varieties of the embossed stamps, especially those without or with inverted embossing. The fakers have used for this purpose either genuine stamps, by flattening out the genuine embossing and embossing an inverted head with a faked die, or they have used available printer's waste without embossing for the same purpose. Sperati did the same thing differently, by bleaching out the frame and printing an inverted one in place of it, but we have seen such fakes of the imperforate stamps only. Numerous are faked cancellations, especially on those stamps where there is a great difference between the value of unused and used stamps, namely the 80c of 1862 and the 10c postage due stamp of 1863. But aside from that, the many cheap

unused stamps are inviting for the faking of rare cancellations and the fakers have made good use of that possibility, imitating attractive cancellations, especially also colored ones, in red and blue, or even creating cancellation phantasies which never existed genuine. All together, the specialist of the stamps of Italy must be very alert and careful to avoid the pitfalls of buying faked stamps and varieties as genuine ones.

Although it is reported that the manufacturers of *Postal Forgeries* of the Old Italian States claimed that they worked only as patriots, to damage the hated foreign oppressors, the manufacture of such forgeries to defraud the post office did not cease after the oppressors were chased out and Italy was united. Of the second 15c stamp, two forgeries are known, which seem to have been produced by the same band of crooks. Both were used exclusively in the Neapolitan Provinces, the one at Naples (Type I), the other at Aquila and Rieti (Type II). They were engraved singly on small plates, each containing 14 designs, and recess-printed; therefore, 14 subtypes are known of each of the two types. They exist used and, considerably rarer, unused. Of Type II, an unused block of 4 and a used pair are known. They were used in 1863, the earliest known dates being March 22 for Type I and November 18 for Type II. They are rather crude productions, and it is not surprising that they passed only for a short time without being detected. After they were detected, considerable quantities of them were confiscated. The court files produced not only small unused quantities of the forgeries, but also some confiscated letters with them. They can be distinguished without much difficulty not only by the crude design and the different printing method, but also by their color, which is blue with a greenish tint for Type I and slate blue to blackish blue for Type II. All these forgeries are rare and sought for, especially on cover.

Italy inherited its first *Postmarks* from eight different postal administrations, namely Austria (Lombardy), Modena, Naples, Parma, Roman States, Sardinia, Sicily and Tuscany. Each of these countries used different types of town postmarks, and several of them had special cancellers, using the town postmarks only alongside the stamps. In the early period, all these usages were continued, and we find on the stamps of

Sardinia and, although in a reduced degree, also on the first stamps of Italy, many of the postmarks which had been in use in the Old Italian States. Three of these states, Lombardy, Parma and Sardinia, had no special cancellers in 1861 and used their regular town postmarks for the cancelling of stamps. Of the five other countries, three used special cancellers exclusively, namely Naples the various ANNULATO cancellers, Sicily the ornamented frame cancellers and the Roman States the diamond grid cancellers. The remaining two, Modena and Tuscany, used their six or five bar cancellers or the town postmarks for cancelling. When the Sardo-Italian postal service took over, the postal service in the various territories was reorganized along the lines of the Sardinian postal service. Therefore, cancellation with the town postmarks became the regular kind of cancelling and although some post offices continued to use their special cancellers, this was only during a transitory period and the use of special cancellers ceased almost entirely after 1863. Only few of the old special cancellers can be found later and then they were used only occasionally. The old town postmarks available for cancelling purposes had the characteristic features of the different countries. Sicily generally had oval town postmarks without date indication, Lombardy single circles and several other types with date, but without year, while the others had single or double circles — those of Naples having the town name in a ribbon — with date and year, in the larger towns also with indication of the hour. Now the Sardinian types of town postmarks gradually replaced these old types of postmarks. They were either double circles, town name at top, date with year in center and an ornament — later the indication of the province or location — at bottom, or single circles with the town name at top, date with year in the center and the hour at bottom. At first, all these postmarks had the inscriptions in Roman capitals, but soon sans-serif lettered postmarks of the same general types started to appear. The single circle sans-serif type became the first Italian standard type which all new post offices obtained and which gradually replaced the old postmarks at the other post offices.

The process of distributing uniform town postmarks was still in progress when the general introduction of numeral cancellers

changed the whole cancelling situation. Beginning with March 1, 1866, all post offices started to use numeral cancellers, which had a number in the center of a rectangle with rounded corners, consisting of square dots. The town postmarks were to be placed alongside the stamps on the mail. Only for stamps on printed matter, newspapers etc., was cancelling by the town postmarks continued. All post offices existing on March 1, 1863 were numbered. The first class post offices, from Alessandria to Torino, received the numbers from 1 to 28 in alphabetical order. The second class post offices, from Aequi to Volterra, likewise obtained the numbers from 29 to 170. The third class post offices, from Abbasante to Zerlesco, were numbered from 236 to 2503. The branches of the first class post offices received numbers between 171 and 191. New post offices which were opened after March 1, 1866 obtained the numbers above 2503, in approximate order of their opening dates, apparently without any system. In 1870, at the end of the classic stamps period, about 2900 numbers had been assigned, of which several had been reassigned to new post offices when they had become free through the closing of older post offices. The highest number was 3084, which was reached in 1877, when the further assignment of numeral cancellers in that type ceased. A new type of numeral cancellers, circles of bars, was introduced in that year.

The orderly reorganization of the cancelling procedure was first disturbed in 1866 by the acquisition of Venetia, which again brought a considerable number of Austrian-type town postmarks into use, first as cancellers, then alongside newly assigned numeral cancellers. Only gradually were these town postmarks replaced by the new Italian-type ones; some of them remained in use, although mostly only occasionally, for many years. A second case of disorder was the result of the incorporation of the balance of the Roman States in 1870. In this case, not only did town postmarks of a peculiar type, mostly small double circles, come into use as cancellers of Italian stamps, but also a number of the Roman States diamond grid and diamond of dots cancellers, which partly remained in use for many years, simultaneously with the Italian numeral cancellers. Temporarily, old type cancellers of Sardinia, rectangles of diamond dots, were taken out

of retirement and put to use at several of the newly acquired post offices. At the end of the classic stamp period, the regular method of cancelling was with the numeral canceller, the town postmark being stamped alongside, but with exceptions, especially in the newly acquired provinces.

The rural letter collecting agencies at first had no cancellers and all letters collected by them were cancelled at the next post office. In 1865, these agencies obtained postmarks, dateless straight lines in script letters, as an exception in Italics. They were used in three different manners, seemingly without any system. Some agencies put the postmarks on the mail alongside the stamps and had the next post office cancel the stamps in the usual way; others cancelled them and then the next post office put its cancellation additionally on the stamps; finally, some agencies cancelled the stamps and the next post office usually put its postmark alongside the stamps. Only the first kind of cancelling method conformed to the regulations, but the other kinds were obviously tolerated.

The travelling post offices on railroads had double circle postmarks with route indication and a number. On March 1, 1866, they obtained numeral cancellers with the numbers from 192 to 225 and from then on used their regular postmarks alongside the stamps on mail. The ship post offices, which had first used various kinds of postmarks, later also double circles, obtained numeral cancellers on March 1, 1866 with the numbers 226 to 233. In addition to these Italian ship postmarks, a number of foreign ones can be found on Italian stamps, especially French and Austrian ones. Frequently, Italian stamps on ship letters were cancelled only at the first foreign port, especially at Marseille (numeral canceller "2240") and at Malta ("A 25" canceller).

Fieldpost offices were activated in the classic stamp period only during the war against Austria in 1866. There were 31 post offices, which had cancellers with the numbers I to XXXI. The headquarters had two similar cancellers but with QGP (Quartiere Generale Principale) and QGV (Quartiere Generale Volontari) instead of a number. Their regular postmarks had the inscription POSTA MILITARE ITALIANA and number. They are all rare on stamps.

The post offices abroad had postmarks in the same designs as those in the motherland. Tunis used a double circle TUNISI/POSTA ITALIANE, Alexandria a single circle ALESSANDRIA D'EGITTO and Tripoli a double circle TRIPOLI/BARBERIA. When the numeral cancellers were introduced in 1866, Alexandria received the canceller "234" and Tunis "235"; both were used to cancel the stamps and the town postmark was placed alongside. When the post office at Tripoli was opened in 1869, it did not receive a numeral canceller, but obtained a Sardinian-type rectangle of diamond dots which it used to cancel the stamps. A large portion of mail from the post offices abroad was posted on ships without having been cancelled. In such cases, the stamps were usually cancelled at the port of arrival with special straight line origin postmarks, namely "Da Tunisi" in Italics, "DA ALESSANDRIA D'EGITTO" in Roman type and "TRIPOLI" in Italics.

The postmarks used by the Italian postal service in San Marino will be dealt with in the monograph of that country.

Of special markings for registered letters, first the old markings ASSICURATO, ASSICURATA and PER CONSEGNA were used, as well as RACCOMANDATO, which was the definitive designation. Other markings used were "Too Late" markings, DOPO LA PARTENZA or similar, BOLLO INSUFFICIENTE for insufficiently franked mail and various others. On letters to foreign countries, P. D. and other paid markings were used, as well as other handstamps which were necessitated by the special regulations of postal treaties with the different countries. Most post offices used their regular town postmarks also as arrival and transit markings, but for a number of large post offices special postmarks were created for that purpose.

The color of most Italian cancellations was black, but a relatively large number of blue and red cancellations can be found, the latter mostly on registered mail from the large towns. But almost all these colored postmarks are from the early years, and at the end of the classic stamp period black ink was in use for cancelling of the stamps almost exclusively.

The Swiss postal agencies on Italian soil had the same kinds of postmarks as the post offices in Switzerland proper, namely

single circles with the Swiss cross at bottom. These postmarks come almost exclusively on parcel post cards alongside of stamps and on stampless official letters. On Swiss stamps, they are exceptions and only few are known.

When we survey the use of postmarks for the cancelling of the stamps of Italy, we will find that the earliest issues are cancelled by town postmarks, either taken over from the previous postal services or new ones in the uniform designs adopted after 1861. A very small percentage was cancelled by various cancellers inherited from Old Italian States, augmented by a few new ones, created by industrious postmasters. From March 1, 1866 on, the stamps — except 1c and 2c — generally were cancelled with the numeral cancellers, a practice which was continued to the end of the classic stamp period and many years beyond that. Therefore, of the definitive 1863 issue, the London prints generally were cancelled by town postmarks, the Turin prints by numeral cancellers. The newspaper stamps were cancelled with the regular town postmarks. The postage due stamps at first were not cancelled at all, because the post offices felt that such cancelling was unnecessary, these stamps being worthless in the hands of the public. Later, the regular town postmarks were used as cancellers, in some cases the special arrival postmarks of the large post offices. As an exception, numeral cancellers can also be found on these stamps, or special cancellers, for example the Roman States diamond grid or a boxed ANNULATO. These conditions refer only to the use of the postage due stamps of 1863, while those of 1869 come almost exclusively with town postmarks and only as an exception with other cancellations, for example a straight line "Annulato" in Italics.

The *Literature* about the stamps of Italy is almost entirely written in Italian, the most notable exception being the Kohl Handbook in which Italy was the last country under Dr. Herbert Munk's editorship. This monograph is still the best comprehensive account available, but unfortunately it was not translated into English. The Italian publications mainly deal with limited fields and no monograph on the whole country is available in Italian. In some way, Bolaffi's Specialized Catalog of Italy has filled this gap, by supplying condensed information, but it is far less elaborate than the Kohl

Handbook. As there is practically no literature available in English, the collector who does not read another language may have difficulties in finding sufficient information and this may deter some collector from entering the field.

The *Scott Catalog* lists 21 classic stamps of Italy, of which one is a color variety and should not rate a main number. This leaves 20 stamps, of which 17 are postage stamps; two are postage due stamps and one is a newspaper stamp. Only three of these stamps cost more used than unused, the others are lower priced or the same. The great demand for the better items, originating from Italy, has driven up catalog prices in recent years, especially for unused items, so that the 20 classic stamps of Italy today list a little over \$500 and used they are priced at \$94. Unused, the 10c of 1862 is the highest priced one at \$250, half the total, used the top stamp is the 80c of 1862, priced at \$45. The lowest price for unused is 25c (the second 15c of 1863 and the 1c of 1863), used only 5c (1c and 2c of 1863). More than half of the stamps, namely eleven, still list \$1 or less.

Classic Italy was once one of the least popular countries and actually still is in the United States, the demand for these stamps coming entirely either directly or indirectly from Italy. Considering this, a collector can acquire good material only when he looks for it in out of the way places. If he wants to buy at auction, he will have to pay very high prices when he wants to acquire outstanding items in the field. As the Italian market is a rather unstable one, considering past experience, anyone who buys the rarities in the field at today's prices has a good chance of losing money in case the demand from Italy should slacken, because in comparison with equally rare and desirable items, the Italian ones are greatly overpriced, or, if we take another point of view, those of other countries are greatly underpriced. If the collector is aware of these facts and nevertheless wants to enter the field, he will be able to assemble a nice and attractive collection, although never a top-grade one. But especially when he concentrates on the colorful and diversified cancellations, this will give him as much satisfaction as any other country which has its highlights in perforated stamps. He will enjoy collecting in a field which is not much favored by the collectors in this country.