

# The DISTRIBUTION of "SPECIMEN" STAMPS by the UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

By Marcus Samuel

(Continued from page 587, December 18th)

## Circular No. 53/1255: June 24th, 1882

**INCREASE IN NUMBER OF SPECIMENS REQUIRED FOR DISTRIBUTION TO 100.**

In its present state, the International Bureau requires 92 examples of each document for distribution under Article XXIX. Postal administrations of countries forming part of the Union are 89 in number; one of these administrations requires three specimens of every document and another requires two, making a total of 92. But as it is useful, in view of future expansion of the Union, that there should always be a stock of documents for distribution to be held by the International Bureau, it is requested that, in future, 100 examples of every document of which it is desired to effect distribution should be supplied.

## Circular No. 63/1968: July 20th, 1882

**CHILEAN OCCUPATION OF PERU:** a collection of stamps adopted for the franking of mail originating in Peruvian Territory occupied by Chilean Forces.

**PORTUGAL:** a collection of postage stamps, stamped postcards and envelopes.

**Bureau Collection.** There are no Portuguese stamps with "Specimen" overprints. With the circular dated October 3rd, 1885, were distributed two collections of postage stamps and items of postal stationery issued in Portugal and in the Portuguese Colonies from 1853 to 1884.

## Circular No. 82/2503: September 1st, 1882

**NICARAGUA:** specimens of postage stamps and postcards.

**Bureau Collection.** The only stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1890 1c. to 10p., 1915 ½c. to 50c., and 1928 ½c. to 1 cor.

## Circular No. 86/2626: September 15th, 1882

**MEXICO:** specimens of recently issued 2c., 3c., 6c., 12c., 18c., 24c., 50c., and 100c. postage stamps.



**Bureau Collection.** Only the 1899 1c. to 5p. and a 1921 set are hand-stamped MUESTRA.

## Circular No. 91/2744: October 1st, 1882

**ST. VINCENT:** specimens of ½d., 1d., 4d., 6d., 1s. and 5s. postage stamps and of a ½d. stamped postcard.



**Bureau Collection.** The 1880-82 ½d. orange, 1d. drab, 4d. blue, 6d. green, 1s. vermilion, and 5s. rose-red. The first stamp with SPECIMEN overprint is the 1888 6d. violet which was distributed with the Circular dated September 13th, 1888, followed by the 1889 2½d. on 1d. grey-blue with the Circular

dated July 10th, 1889. Specimen copies of the locally-produced 1892 5d. on 4d. lake-brown provisional were distributed with the circular dated November 23rd, 1892. On these stamps the "Specimen" overprint is in lower case italic type, printed in the same purple colour and from the same fount as the surcharge. One stamp on each pane of 60 showed the error of overprint SPECIMEN; it is improbable that more than seven ever existed, most of which remain locked in official archives.

## Circular No. 94/2802: October 12th, 1882

**ANTIGUA:** specimens of ½d., 1d., 2½d., 4d. and 6d. postage stamps and of a ½d. stamped postcard.



**Bureau Collection.** The 1876-82 ½d. green, 1d. lake, 2½d. brown, 4d. blue and 6d. blue-green. The first stamp with SPECIMEN overprint is the 1886 1s. mauve which was distributed with the Circular dated May 24th, 1886, followed by the 2½d. ultramarine and 4d. chestnut with the Circular dated May 28th, 1887.

**MONTSERRAT:** specimens of 1d., 2½d. and 4d. postage stamps and of a ½d. postcard.



**Bureau Collection.** The 1876-80 1d. red, 2½d. red-brown, 4d. blue and 6d. green. The first stamps with SPECIMEN overprints are the 1885 2½d. ultramarine and 4d. mauve which were distributed with the Circular dated February 10th, 1885.

## Circular No. 110/3090: November 15th, 1882

**ECUADOR:** specimens of 1c., 2c., 5c., 20c., 1r. and 1p. postage stamps.

**Bureau Collection.** No stamps of Ecuador have "Specimen" overprints.

## Circular No. 116/3188: November 25th, 1882

**LUXEMBURG:** specimens of 1c., 2c., 4c., 5c., 10c., 12½c., 20c., 25c., 30c., 50c., 1f. and 5f. postage stamps.

**Bureau Collection:** No stamps of Luxembourg have "Specimen" overprints.

## Circular No. 119/3214: November 30th, 1882

**NEVIS:** specimens of 1d., 2½d., 6d. and 1s. postage stamps and of a ½d. postcard.

**Bureau Collection.** The 1882 1d. lilac-mauve, 2½d. red-brown, 4d. blue and the 1876 lithographed 6d. grey and 1s. green. The first stamp with SPECIMEN overprint is the 1888 6d. chestnut which was distributed with the Circular dated October 29th, 1888, followed by the 1890 1s. violet with the Circular dated March 19th, 1890. (Illustration on page 651.)

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Distribution of Specimen Stamps by U.P.U. (contd. from page 649)



(See text at foot of page 649.)

VIRGIN ISLANDS: specimens of 1d., 2½d., 4d., 6d. and of two types of 1s. postage stamps.



**Bureau Collection.** The 1880 1d. emerald and 2½d. brown, and 1867-68 lithographed 4d. lake, 6d. rose, 1s. crimson with coloured margins and 1s. rose-carmine with single-lined frame. The first stamp with SPECIMEN overprint is the 1887 4d. chestnut which was distributed with the Circular dated September 26th, 1887, followed by the 1888 6d. violet with the Circular dated March 27th, 1888, and the 1889 1d. rose and 1s. sepia with the Circular dated January 16th, 1889.

**Circular No. 15/366: February 8th, 1883**

JAPAN: specimens of 1s., 2s. and 5s. postage stamps.



**Bureau Collection.** There are many early issues with MIHON overprints including the 1871 48m., 100m., 200m. and 500m.; the 1872 Dragon ½s., 1s. and 5s.; and the 1875 Birds 12s., 15s. and 45s. It is believed that these were included in two collections of Japanese postage stamps and items of postal stationery which were distributed with the Circular dated June 6th, 1888. The items distributed with this circular are fully listed, and it is stated that the 1872 Dragon 2s. was then out of stock. No stamps later than 1888 have "Mihon" overprints.

**Circular No. 39/864: March 28th, 1883**

GAMBIA: specimens of ½d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d. and 1s. postage stamps and of a 1½d. stamped postcard.



**Bureau Collection.** The 1880 ½d. to 1s. The first stamp with SPECIMEN overprint is the 1886 6d. olive green which was distributed with the Circular dated June 8th, 1886, followed by the 1887 ½d. green, 1d. carmine and 2d. orange with the Circular dated April 1st, 1877. The 2½d. blue, 3d. grey, and 1s. violet are without "Specimen" overprints.

In the collection of the *Paris Postal Museum*, the last three stamps are hand-stamped SPECIMEN, but it is not believed that they were generally distributed thus.

**Circular No. 47/1121: April 20th, 1883**

HELIGOLAND: specimens of 5 pf., 10 pf., 20 pf., 25 pf., 50 pf., 1m. and 5m postage stamps and of stamped postcards and wrappers.

**Bureau Collection.** These are without "Specimen" overprints.

**Circular No. 129/3456: December 16th, 1883**

COSTA RICA: specimens of 1c., 2c., 10c. and 40c. postage stamps and of stamped postcards.



**Bureau Collection.** The 1889 1c. to 5p. are overprinted SPECIMEN.

In the next instalment of this valuable record, Mr. Samuel deals with the *British Crown Colony Territories* which hitherto had supplied stamps to the U.P.U. in normal mint condition without overprints. From 1884 the position was regularised and the account ties up the supply of specimen stamps to the Bureau Collection and instructions quoted in "The De La Rue History of British and Foreign Postage Stamps", by John Easton.

**GAMBIA SELF-GOVERNMENT SERIES**

During February, Gambia is to issue a four-value Independence set—½d., 2d., 2½d. and 1s.6d. stamps—in two designs and, simultaneously, the current "Bird" definitives are expected to appear overprinted "INDEPENDENCE 1965".

**NIGERIA KENNEDY IMPERFS.**

The British stamp trade paper, *The Philatelic Exporter*, states in the December issue that 4,000 sets of the Nigerian Kennedy Memorial issue (not the miniature sheet) were issued imperforate. Although valid for postage, says the report, none of this supply of imperforates appears to have been on sale in Nigerian post offices.