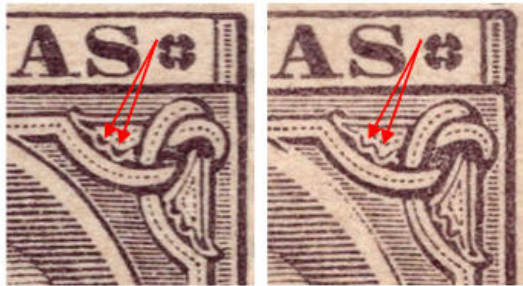


1890 – 1897

DIES AND CLICHÉ TYPES

The first series of stamps released during the reign of King Alfonso XIII, known as 'Babyhead' stamps, were issued between 1890 and 1897. Although the stamps are all similar in design, five separate die types are apparent. Printing requirements and in particular the creation of larger sheet sizes resulted in the creation of additional clichés to construct the new plates and in these new clichés variations in the master die can be observed.

All sheets issued in 1890 comprised a 10x10 format sheet and were constructed using a master die (Die Type I). Many of the new printings produced in 1892 and 1894 continued to use the clichés created using this die.



Cliché Type I
Infilled Cusps

Cliché Type II
No Infill in Cusps

However, in 1892 the appearance of new denomination issues and new sheet formats (in particular the 2c violet issue in its larger format comprising 150 stamps) meant that additional clichés were required and for these, against which a new die appears to have been created (Die Type II). The plates of the 1892 2c issues and the 1894 issues included clichés of both die types.

The difference between these two cliché types is principally noticeable in the upper right corner and directly below the 'S' of 'FILIPINAS'. In Cliché Type I the 'cusps' of the scroll are shaded more or less heavily, while in Cliché Type II there is no shading at all in the 'cusps' which consist of only a thin scroll line.

A requirement to produce a new larger sheet format meant that additional clichés were required for some of the values issued in 1896. This time clichés from the older plates were not included in the new plates and entirely new clichés were generated (Cliché Type III). The new clichés are similar to Cliché Type II in that there is no shading in the cusps that make up the ornamental scroll. However, in the new clichés there is an imperfection represented by a slight bulging in the oval frame at the 12 o'clock position and the lower right ornamental scroll has a crisp definition with an unfilled cusp at the top (clichés of Die Type II generally have this cusp infilled).

The 1/8m dull blue issue of 1896 was also issued in the new sheet format of the above stamps and this was also created with new clichés. These clichés (Cliché Type IV) are very similar to those of Cliché Type III except that the bulging in the oval frame is less distinct and the top cusp of the lower right ornamental scroll is no longer crisp.



Cliché Type II



Cliché Type III



Cliché Type IV

The introduction of two new denominations (40c and 80c) in 1897 required new plates and clichés to be created. Both stamps show a distinct variation (Cliché Type V) in the die used to create the clichés. The clichés show a broken oval frame at the 12 o'clock position and shows no infill or small infill due to inking to cusp.

The five die types described represent five distinguishable changes in the die used to create the clichés. These changes are distinct to the dies and occur on all clichés generated from the dies and differ for example from plate wear and damage or from constant plate flaws which occur on individual clichés. It appears likely that at least two master dies existed (Die Type I and Die Type II). Cliché Types III, IV and V possibly represent the evolution of a single die that has become worn with time. Whether these later clichés were created from a third master die or from the master die of Type II which had been retouched or become damaged is difficult to determine with certainty.



Cliché Type V