

1864 ISSUE by W&S

Captain Robert Todd secured the first international mail contract with the Venezuelan authorities in 1864 using the steamship "Honfleur" to initiate the service to and from St Thomas. However, soon thereafter he ordered a new vessel, "The Robert Todd" from shipbuilders in Liverpool, whose silhouette was used in the design of the stamps

Stamps were clearly as essential as the vessel to carry the mail. He contracted with Messers. Waterlow & Sons of London to print stamps in two denominations, Medio Real and Dos Reales, each printed in two colors. This was a practical solution to an exchange anomaly. The value of the Real was higher in St Thomas than it was in Venezuela. The rose and green stamps were to be used for mail originating in Venezuela, and the grey and yellow for mail originating in St Thomas directed to Venezuela

White paper, sheets of 100 stamps, perforation 12 1/2 x 13
"Th. Saunders" watermark



In order to diagram and print sheets of 100 (10x10) stamps, the lithographic stone was made up to five separated transfer types in a horizontal row repeated 20 times. Each transfer has its own particular characteristic

MEDIO REAL

Rose

The "Medio Real" rose stamp was intended for use from Venezuela to St Thomas for mail weighing under 1/2 -ounce (These stamps were never used internally in Venezuela). The anomaly was that the Venezuelan "Peso" had eight "Reales" value in St Thomas, but was worth ten "Reales" in Venezuela. It was possible to balance this difference in values by stamping each value in a different color. So when mailing from St Thomas to Venezuela, the two "Reales" or "Medio Real" stamp was not necessary. That is the reason for there being very few used stamps of the "Medio Real"

Type I

Corresponding to the first and sixth columns

Characteristics:

The lower left corner square is joined to the upper square by a dash.

Pto.'s "t" has a dot.



Position 46
Rose dot on the left outer frame

Type II

Corresponding to the second and seventh columns.

Characteristics:

White dot in CABELLO's "B"

Two rose colored spots in REAL's "A"



Position 92
Tiny white spot at the foot of LA GUAIRA's "R"

Type III

Corresponding to the third and eighth columns.

Characteristics:

A 2mm line connects the trimming under PAQUETE

Incomplete scroll lines at the lower left corner



Position 93
White semicircle on REAL's "R"

Type IV

Corresponding to the fourth and ninth column.

Characteristics:

White curls upon PAQUETE's first "E"

Stain on REAL's upper part



Position 55
Rose dot on the left outer frame



Position 85
Rose stain on REAL's "A"

Type V

Corresponding to the fifth and tenth columns.

Characteristics:

Small spot on GUAIRA's "A"



Used with the "Federation" cancel