

The Second Emission of the Russian Administration of Rethymnon, Crete (May 27th/July 12th, 1899)

For a detailed historical context, please read the introduction of the previous "One-Frame" exhibit: "The first Emission of the Russian Administration of Rethymnon, Crete (May 1st/June 30th, 1899)".

Starting 1887, Crete was under an international protection with Chania province managed by the Italian administration, the Rethymnon region by the Russian one, the Heraklion region by the British one and the Lasithi/Sitia regions by the French one.

The four Major Powers installed all the components of their administration and in particular postal services. Great Britain was the first one to do it (November 25th, 1898) in Heraklion region, followed and copied in many aspects, by the Russian in the district of Rethymnon. On April 24th & 28th, 1899, Colonel Theodore von Chiotak, the Chief Administrator of the Rethymnon province, published "ordres du jour" Nos. 104 & 108 to decree the establishment of a postal service starting May 1st, 1899.

The stamps of the first emission (May 1st/June 30th, 1899), also called "provisional", (see the previous "One-Frame" exhibit) were printed locally, manually and individually. As only less than 30,000 stamps have been printed, they have been "swallowed" by the local population in less than three weeks... So, the Russian authorities of Rethymnon decided to issue a second emission. That time, following exactly the same way as the British administration of Heraklion earlier, they have asked the printer Grundman (which later become Grundman & Stangel) in Athens to create and print this second emission.

This new emission has been printed in lithography with the Poseidon's trident as effigy (coming from a Rethymnon antic coin), with the legend "Provisional Post-Offices" in Greek and is perforated (11 & ½).



Two issues of this second emission have been printed in three values each (1 & 2 metallik and 1 grosion):

- The "without star" issue:
 - First date of issue: May 27th, 1899.
 - In six colours (rose, blue, green, orange, lilac & yellow) for each value,
 - 1,000 items printed of each value in each colour, in sheets of 20 stamps (5 X 4).
- The "with stars" issue:
 - First date of issue: June 8th, 1899.
 - In four colours (blue, green, rose & lilac) for each value,
 - Printed in sheets of 32 stamps (8 X 4).

Each stamp wears a small circular control postmark, in blue or purple and on the middle-centre of the stamp, representing the two-heads eagle of the Russian Empire.

The number of stamps printed of the "with stars" issue is unknown, but the Russian administration archives give the number of stamps sold by value & by colour:

Colour	1 metallik	2 metallik	1 grosion
Rose	6,363	4,200	1,536
Green	6,399	3,378	1,825
Blue	6,960	4,864	1,440
Lilac	6,400	3,200	2,942
Total	26,122	15,642	7,743
	49,507		

Colonel Theodore von Chiotak, the Russian Chief Administrator of the Rethymnon province.



The same linear postmarks as the first emission, with the name of fourteen town/villages of the province were used to cancel this second emission. If the one of the main town of the district, Rethymnon, is common, the ones of the thirteen other villages are rare and extremely rare for some of them and even several of them are unknown. A circular dated postmark of Rethymnon was also introduced for this issue.

Having such a number of values & colours, representing a total of eighteen different stamps for the first issue and twelve for the second one, for such a small territory (~45 km X ~30 km) and a small population (~30,000 inhabitants) is really demonstrating that the two issues of this second emission, as for the first emission to a lesser extent, were issued for speculative reasons... And it worked well as, for the first issue, the 18,000 stamps were all devoured by the local population during the first day of issue! So, the very large majority of these stamps/covers have been used for "philatelic" reasons... and/or are with forgeries stamps and/or with fakes cancellations and this much more on this second emission than on the first one...

Plan:

- Introduction & historic
- The "without star" issue
 - The black & the other colours plate-proofs
 - The 1 & 2 metallik and 1 grosion stamps
- The "with stars" issue
 - The plate-proofs
 - The 1 & 2 metallik and 1 grosion stamps & covers

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Plate-proofs of:

- the first issue (black),
- the second issue (deep purple & blue).



Bibliography:

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The “without star” issue - Plate-proofs in black

The “without star” emission has been printed in lithography by the printer **Grundman & Stangel** in **Athens**. Three values (1 & 2 metallik, and 1 grosion), each in six colours (rose, blue, green, orange, lilac & yellow) have been printed in 1,000 items each. They are perforated 11½ and have a blue or purple small circular control mark on the front. The first day of issue was May 27th, 1899.

The printer during the preparation of the printing material have done plate-proofs. These are some plate-proofs in black colour printed on the reverse of a trial bond (“obligation”) written in German.



Single plate-proof of the **1 metallik** black w/o any postmark, printed on the reverse of an “obligation”. Picture of the verso on the right.

Unique item known as of today.

(©)



Block of four plate-proofs of the **1 grosion/2 metallik** black with the circular postmark of **Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ)** and the linear one of **Anogia (ΑΝΩΓΙΑ)**, with blue control marks, printed on the back of an “obligation”. Picture of the verso on the right.

Unique item known as of today.

(©)

The “without star” issue - Plate-proofs in various colours

The “without star” emission has been printed in lithography by the printer **Grundman & Stangel** in **Athens**. Three values (1 & 2 metallik, and 1 grosion), each in six colours (rose, blue, green, orange, lilac & yellow) have been printed in 1,000 items each. They are perforated 11½ and have a blue or purple small circular control mark on the front. The first day of issue was May 27th, 1899. These are some plate-proofs in various colours:



Block of four of the **2 metallik** plate-proof in blue, printed recto-verso.
Picture of the verso on the right.



Plate-proofs of the three values (**1 & 2 metallik** and **1 grosion**), all printed recto-verso in various colours.

The “without star” issue - Stamps of 1 metallik

These are the six colours, plus the black one, of the 1 metallik mint and with various postmarks:



Complete set of the six colours of the mint 1 metallik with blue or purple control marks.



1 metallik, lilac, postmark of Aghia Galini (ΑΓΙΟΣ ΓΑΛΛΗΝΗΣ).



1 metallik, green, postmark of Sellia (ΣΕΛΙΑ).



1 metallik, orange, postmark of Kastelli (ΚΑΣΤΕΛΙ).



1 metallik, yellow, postmark of Sellia (ΣΕΛΙΑ).



1 metallik, blue, postmark of Melambes (ΜΕΛΑΜΠΕΣ).



1 metallik, rose, postmark of Rethymnon (ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 metallik, black with the circular postmark of Rethymnon, dated June 8th, 1899.

The black colour is not mentioned in any of the “*ordre du jour*” of the Russian Governor of the province, Colonel **Theodore von Chioatak**. So, it’s considered as a plate-proof (see page 3). Very few single stamps & covers are existing with postmarks which are for sure “*complaisance*” ones...

The “without star” issue - Stamps of 2 metallik

These are the six colours, plus the black one, of the 2 metallik mint and with various postmarks:



Complete set of the six colours of mint 2 metallik with blue or purple control marks, or w/o (lilac).



2 metallik, lilac, postmark of Rethymnon (ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



2 metallik, green, postmark of Spili (ΣΠΙΛΙ).



2 metallik, orange, postmark of Rethymnon (ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



2 metallik, yellow, postmark of Anogia (ΑΝΩΓΙΑ).



2 metallik, blue, postmark of Rethymnon (ΡΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



2 metallik, rose, postmark of Melambes (ΜΕΛΑΜΠΕΣ).



2 metallik, black mint and one with the circular postmark of Rethymnon, dated June 8th, 1899.

The black colour is not mentioned in any of the “ordre du jour” of the Russian Governor of the province, Colonel **Theodore von Chiostak**. So, it’s considered as a plate-proof (see page 3). Very few single stamps & covers are existing with postmarks which are for sure “complaisance” ones...

The "without star" issue - Stamps of 1 grosion

These are the six colours, plus the black one, of the 1 grosion mint and with various postmarks:



Complete set of the six colours of the mint 1 grosion with blue or purple control marks.



1 grosion, lilac, postmark of Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 grosion, green, postmark of Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 grosion, orange, postmark of Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 grosion, yellow, postmark of Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 grosion, blue, postmark of Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 grosion, rose, postmark of Rethymnon (ΠΕΘΥΜΝΟΝ).



1 grosion, black mint (©) and one with the circular postmark of Rethymnon, dated June 8th, 1899.

The black colour is not mentioned in any of the "ordre du jour" of the Russian Governor of the province, Colonel **Theodore von Chiostak**. So, it's considered as a plate-proof (see page 3). Very few single stamps & covers are existing with postmarks which are for sure "compliance" ones...

The "with stars" issue - Plate-proofs in various colours

The "with stars" emission has been printed in lithography by the printer **Grundman & Stangel** in **Athens**. Three values (1 & 2 metallik, and 1 grosion), each in four colours (rose, blue, green & lilac) have been printed (see the sold quantities in the introduction page). These are some plate-proofs:



Block of four of the **1 grosion** plate-proof in deep rose, printed recto-verso.



Block of four of the **2 metallik** plate-proof in blue, printed recto-verso.



Plate-proofs blue & green of various values, double impression.



Block of four plate-proofs blue of various values double impression and printed recto-verso.

The "with stars" issue - The 1 grosion plate-proofs complete sheet

This is a complete unperforated sheet of thirty-two (8 X 4) plate-proofs of the 1 grosion rose, before perforation and before the stamping of the circular control mark.
To be noticed: the cross markers between each stamp for the correct alignment of the future perforation.



Complete sheet of thirty-two plate-proofs (8 X 4) of the 1 grosion rose, unperforated and w/o control mark.

The "with stars" issue - Stamps of 1 metallik

The "with stars" emission has been printed in lithography by the printer **Grundman & Stangel** in **Athens**. Three values (1 & 2 metallik, and 1 grosion), each in four colours (rose, blue, green & lilac) have been printed (see the sold quantities in the introduction page). They are perforated 11½ and have a blue or purple small circular control mark on the front. The first day of issue was June 8th, 1899. These are the four colours of the 1 metallik mint and with various postmarks:



Complete set of the four colours of the mint 1 metallik with purple control marks.



1 metallik, blue, inverted control mark, postmark of Rethymnon (PEΘYMNON).



1 metallik, blue, postmark of Sellia (ΣΕΛΙΑ).



1 metallik, blue, postmark of Roustika (ΡΟΥΣΤΙΚΑ).



1 metallik, green, postmark of Rethymnon (PEΘYMNON).



1 metallik, green, postmark of the prefecture of Rethymnon.



1 metallik, green, postmark of Melambes (ΜΕΛΑΜΠΕΣ).



1 metallik, rose, postmark of Aghia Galini (ΑΓΙΟΣ ΓΑΛΗΝΗΣ).



1 metallik, rose, postmark of Rethymnon (PEΘYMNON).



1 metallik, rose, postmark of Amari (ΑΜΑΡΙ).

The “with stars” issue - Stamps of 2 metallik

The “with stars” emission has been printed in lithography by the printer **Grundman & Stangel** in **Athens**. Three values (1 & 2 metallik, and 1 grosion), each in four colours (rose, blue, green & lilac) have been printed (see the sold quantities in the introduction page). They are perforated 11½ and have a blue or purple small circular control mark on the front. The first day of issue was June 8th, 1899. These are the four colours of the 2 metallik mint and with various postmarks:



Complete set of the four colours of the mint **2 metallik** with purple control marks.



Marginal block of four of the **2 metallik**, blue, cancelled on July 12th, 1899 with the circular postmark of **Rethymnon (PEΘYMNON)**.



2 metallik, blue, postmark of **Kastelli (KΑΣTEΛI)**.



2 metallik, green, postmark of **Rethymnon (PEΘYMNON)**.



2 metallik, blue, postmark of **Melambes (ΜΕΛΑΜΠΕΣ)**.

The "with stars" issue - Stamps of 1 grosion

The "with stars" emission has been printed in lithography by the printer **Grundman & Stangel** in **Athens**. Three values (1 & 2 metallik, and 1 grosion), each in four colours (rose, blue, green & lilac) have been printed (see the sold quantities in the introduction page). They are perforated 11½ and have a blue or purple small circular control mark on the front. The first day of issue was June 8th, 1899. These are the four colours of the 1 grosion mint and with various postmarks:



Block of four of the mint **1 grosion**, green with double perforation.

Block of four of the mint **1 grosion**, lilac.

Block of four of the **1 grosion**, rose with skew perforation.

(©)



Block of four of the **1 grosion**, blue with postmark of the prefecture of **Rethymnon**.



1 grosion, green with postmark of **Sellia (Σελία)**.



1 grosion, rose with postmark of **Aghia Galini (Άγιος Γαλήνης)**.

The "with stars" issue - Covers

It exists very few letters with the stamps of this second emission. On the "ordres du jour" of the Russian Governor of the province, Colonel **Theodore von Chiostak**, it's stated that the postal services were dedicated to an internal use inside the **Rethymnon** province... These are two letters, "sent" outside Crete, one to **Athens** and one to **Saint Petersburg**, Russia... So, these letters have been created by counterfeiters to feed the appetite of the philatelists...



"Philatelic" letter "from **Rethymnon** to **Athens**" ...



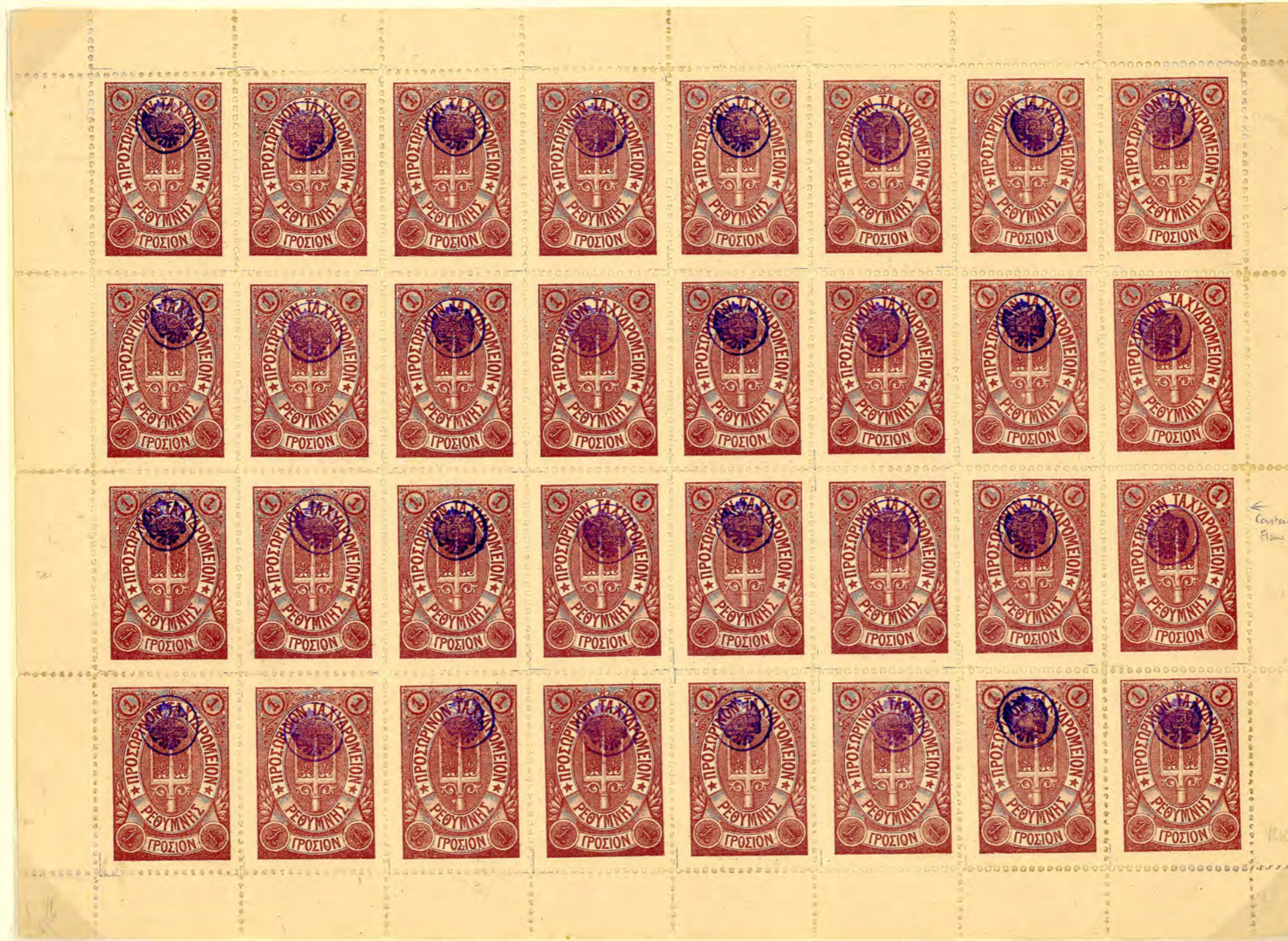
Fake letter "sent from **Rethymnon** on October 22nd, 1899 to **Saint Petersburg**, Russia on Nov. 13th, 1899 (postmark on the verso). via **Constantinople**, Turkey on Nov. 1Xth, 1899 with a Postal wagon postmark dated on Nov. 13th, 1899. (postmark on the verso)" ...



Pictures of the Russian postmarks on the back of the cover.

The "with stars" issue - The 1 grosion lilac complete sheet

This is a complete sheet of thirty-two (8 X 4) stamps of the 1 grosion lilac, perforated 11½ and with purple control marks.



Complete sheet of thirty-two stamps (8 X 4) of the 1 grosion lilac, perforated 11½ and with purple control marks.

In conclusion, the post offices of the Russian administration of **Rethymnon** closed on July 12th, 1899 as the expeditionary forces left the province. The last "ordre du jour" (No. 177) is stating that all the material (stones, plates & postmarks) as well as all the stamps surplus have been destroyed. It also gives the amount of revenues generated by the sale of the stamps of the two emissions: 38,965.35 piasters which were distributed to caritative organisations: 666,000 piasters to the **Rethymnon** hospital, 1,800,000 piasters to the autonomous Cretan Post administration & to the newspaper "Anangenisiss" and 34,690.35 piasters to the Orthodox Church. The Russian administration of **Rethymnon** has followed exactly the same process as the British one of **Heraklion** few months before and the two emissions issued have been highly speculative (in particular this second one), feeding the philatelic market which was booming at the turn of the two centuries. All the stamps of these emissions have been heavily counterfeited and the very large majority of the cancellations are fake or were done by "complaisance". Anyway, these stamps are existing and were issued officially by a state-owned administration. It's interesting to study them and to analyse how philately was a source of revenue to satisfy the ambition of a military Governor who, at the end, gave the totality of the incomes to local caritative organisations. These stamps have also enjoyed many generations of philatelists all over the world...