

Fabulous Firsts:

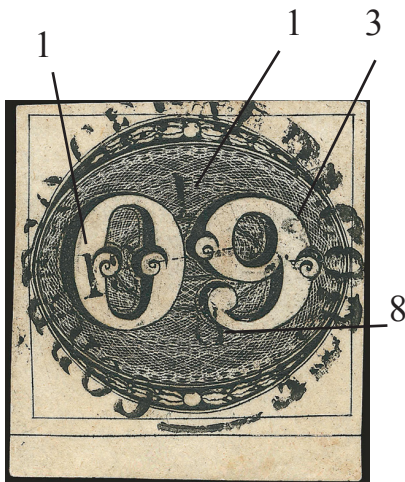
Brazil (August 1, 1843)

by Philip H. Ward (from *Mekeel's Weekly*, February 28, 1938 with images and updates added)

[See page 4 for additional information not part of this Ward article.] We have had the opportunity of picking from one of the finest collections of Brazil ever gotten together. Formed in that country by one who had ample funds to acquire the finest the market afforded, it was a partial guide of what existed in those early numeral issues, the Bulls Eyes, the Slanting Figures and the Small Figures which are seldom seen except in single copies.

Brazil was the second nation of the world to issue postage stamps, its first series appearing on August 1, 1843, just four years to the day before our own first governmental emission appeared. Their postal system may be said to date from April, 1798, when the first post office was established in Rio de Janeiro although previous to that time letters were distributed in the public square.

1843 60r deep black (Sc. 2), first composite plate, State A, Position 1—the first stamp in the 60r pane—cancelled by a full clear strike of “Correio Geral da Corte 1/8/1843” first day of issue datestamp. In this photo we picture the stamp upside down with arrows pointing to the “1” (day) at the top within the cancel frame, “8” (month) bottom (showing only the right side of the numeral), “1” of 1843 center left, and “3” of 1843 center right. For a clearer cancel, see the cover below. Reminder: for a closer look, use your pdf magnifier.



Canceling of the stamps was ordered at either the office of origin or office of delivery. Instructions called for the cancellation to be part on the stamp and part on the cover. One official decree stated that “Cancellations should bear name of locality, day, month and year”. In cases where the cancellation lacked the date the postmaster was instructed to fill in the date by hand. As a result, we often find early Brazil with manuscript date on the stamp or cover. We have seen these early cancellations in red, green, blue, magenta, black and brown. Black, however, is the commonest.

The first issue of 1843, known as the Bulls Eyes (Olho-de-Boi), consist of three values, the 30, 60 and 60Reis. Engraved in black with large figures of value in the center they show no other letters or figures to indicate what they are and where issued.



Left to right, Brazil Sc. 1-3



The unique cover with all three values of the first issue. Each stamp with sheet margins and frame lines top and bottom, all tied by Rio de Janeiro 22 8 43 double circle date stamps

The three denominations are printed on the same plate in blocks of eighteen (six horizontal by three vertical) with frame lines around each block of eighteen. They were evidently separated at the post office into miniature sheets of eighteen, for but one pair is known showing two values.



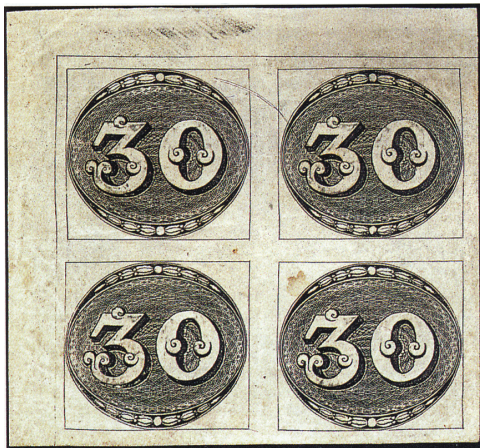
1843 90r black early Intermediate Impression (Sc. 3), complete unused pane of 18, 1st Composite Plate, State A—the only known 90r pane.

Later the 60R which was required in larger quantities was printed in sheets of sixty (six horizontal by ten vertical). Blocks from the larger plates are exceedingly desirable. In fact, all denominations in larger multiples than pairs are scarce and blocks are really rare. [See page 4 for more detail on printing

In the collection which is now being broken there were photographs of all blocks shown at the Brazilian Exhibition as well as other blocks known. As the number of blocks known are so small we list those either in the collection or illustrated in the hopes that if others exist we may be so advised.

The famous se-tenant “Pack Strip” with two of the 30r and one 60r. Notice the “Interpaneau” (inter-pane) line along which the 30r and 60r panes would normally have been separated.

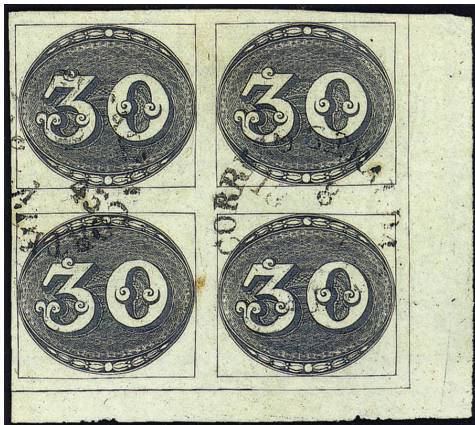




30r, Sc. 1, unused block of four with upper left sheet margin and frame lines



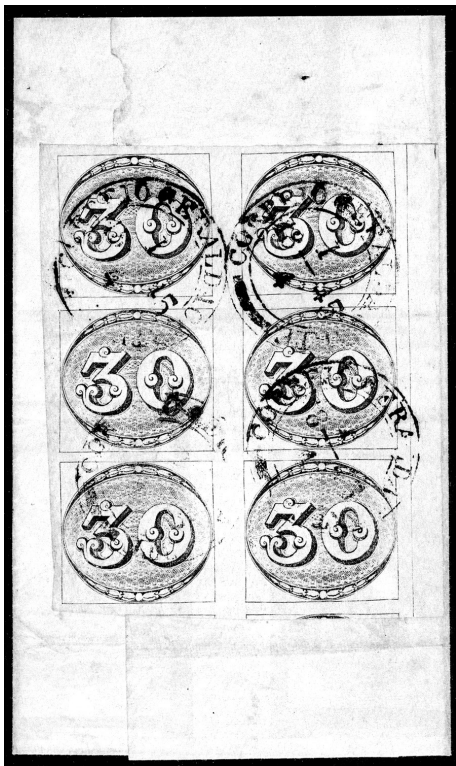
The key item of Brazil from the award-winning Hugo Goeggel collection, the 30 reis interpane Bull's Eye block of four, which proved the existence of a third plate for the stamp.



A used block of four of the 30r, Sc. 1, with right and bottom frame lines and sheet margin. Rare from the "3rd Plate". Not counted by Ward.



30r black Late Impression (Sc. 1), Large Plate, State A, Positions 23-24/29-30/35-36 block of six, including sheet margin and outer frameline at right (bottom in this photo), tied by one of four strikes of "Correio Geral da Corte 1/4/1845" circular date stamp on folded cover to Rio Pardo, described as "one of the top five philatelic items of Brazil and one of the world's greatest Classic Imperforate covers". The block is affixed over the backflap and was carefully opened to preserve the block.



A block of 6 not counted by Ward of the 30r, Sc. 1, with right margin and frame line, tied on reverse of 1845 cover by "Correio Geraldcorde..." double circle date stamps.

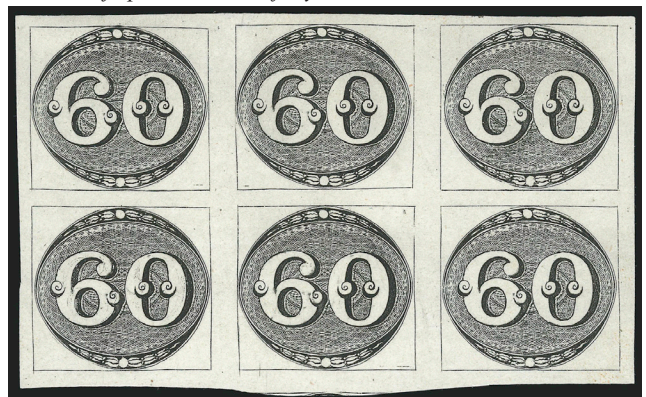
Of the 30R Bulls Eye in mint condition but two blocks are known, both blocks of four.

One block is in the deep black of the first printing, early state of the plate, and comes from the upper left corner of the pane (shown) for it has the extra frame lines at the top and left. The second block is from a later printing and shows no traces of the extra frame line on any side.

There are seven used blocks; one a block of nine, one of eight, one of six and four blocks of four. The block of nine (3x3) has the shield type Pernambuco postmark date Jan. 29, 1844, and has an extra frame line at the left. The block of eight (4x2) is cancelled with two concentric circles, "Correio de Corytiba" without date, the marks falling in the center of each block. The block of six (2x3) is from the right end of the pane with extra frame at top, right and bottom and has three postmarks, one in the center of each pair, "Porto Sue Alege" without date. In the case of four blocks of four, one has an extra frame at the left and has two "Corte" postmarks dated 8-1845, the second "Corte" 24-1-1845, the third "Corte" 6-1849, while the fourth block is cancelled twice "CEARA" without date.

The 30R in block form is rarer than the 60R or 90R, at least that is what the available records show. Only two mint blocks known and as the used block of eight could be cut into two blocks of four there is a possibility of eight used blocks, making ten in all.

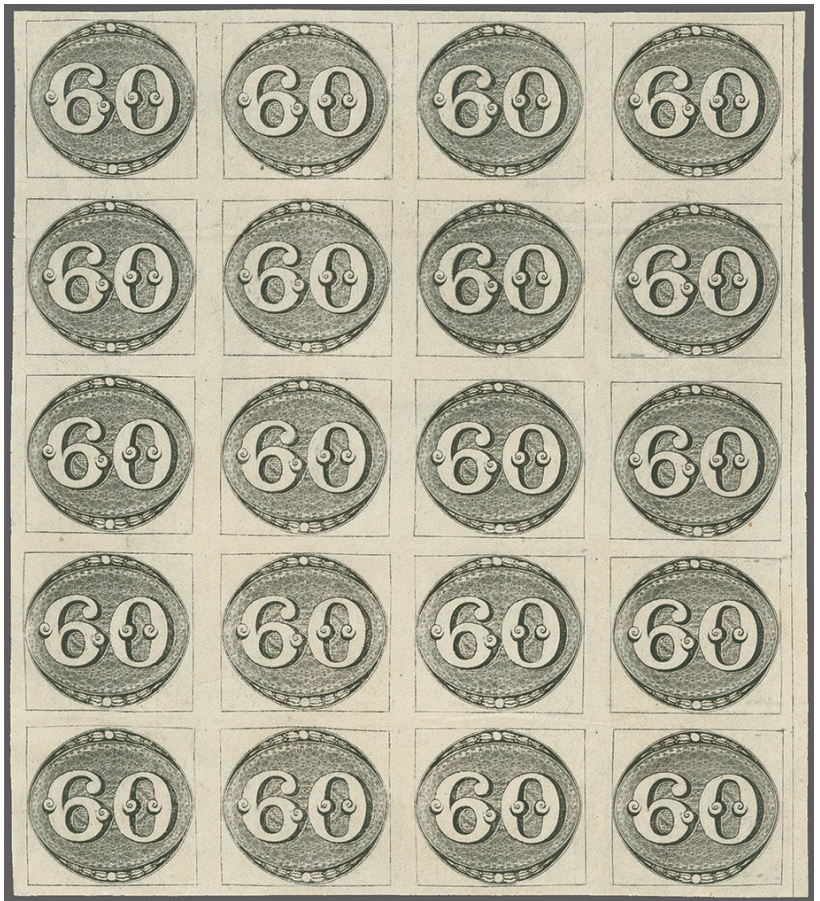
Of the 60R Bulls Eye undoubtedly the outstanding piece is an unused block of twenty (four horizontal by five vertical, photo p. 3) from the large plate of sixty subjects. It is in the light black, intermediate printing, with extra frame line at the right. This is a relatively new find and was not known at the time of the Napier book on Brazil. It is from the famous Guilherme Guinle Collection and is one of the highlights of Brazilian philately. The next largest unused block is one of nine (3x3) with frame at bottom followed by a block of eight (4x2) with frame at the right. There is a block of six in the earliest printing (2x3) with frames at top, right and bottom and three blocks of four, one with frame at bottom, one with frame at top and the third with frame at left and bottom. We are told that one of these blocks



1843 60r black Intermediate Impression (Sc. 2), first Large Plate, State B, Positions 44-46/50-52.



1843 60r black Intermediate Impression (Sc. 2) first Composite Plate, State B, Positions 3-5/9-11/15-17, block of nine (the left half of the pane of 18) including outer framelines at top and bottom and interpanneau dividing line below two righthand stamps at bottom, cancelled by framed "CIDADE DE NICTHEROY" handstamp. Bull's Eye stamps from the composite plates that show the dividing line between panes are called Semi-Xiphopagus. The 60r Semi-Xiphopagus stamps come from the top or bottom of the middle pane (twelve positions).



Largest unused multiple of the 60r

of four was presented to President Roosevelt on his recent trip to Brazil. This totals seven unused blocks in all. Two of these blocks would be cut which could give us a possible eleven blocks unused.

Of the used blocks seven exist which could be separated into twelve blocks so that the 60R differs from the 30R in that the used block is almost as scarce as the unused block. There are two used pieces definitely from the large plate, one a block of 20 (2x10) cancelled "Corte" 8—4—1845. There are extra frame lines at the top and bottom. The second block is one of 13 (a block of 15 with the lower left vertical pair missing) cancelled "Cidade de Nictheroy". A block of nine (3x3) with frame at right and block of four have the same postmark. A block of six (2x3) has a postmark consisting of the town name within a rectangle with rounded ends. The name we cannot decipher. There are two more blocks of four, one with frame at right cancelled "Corte" 21—1—1847, the other "Victoria" in straight line postmark. We believe the used block of nine is the largest block known from the small pane of 18.

The 90R Bulls Eye is the rarest stamp in singles but blocks are not as scarce as the 30R and in the case of used blocks somewhat more plentiful than the 60R. Only one block is known unused, a block of 12 (4x3) which could be separated into two blocks of six [Since this was written, there is a larger known block, pictured on page 1, the complete pane of 18. JFD.]. This is in the early printing and has extra frame line at the bottom. We have been told this is from a miniature sheet of 18 which was sold to a well-known South American collector. As the stamps at the right and left ends were somewhat ragged, the collector took his shears and trimmed a vertical strip of three from each end leaving the block of 12.

Of used pieces, ten blocks exist, some large that could be cut into smaller blocks so that 15 blocks are possible. The largest used block is one of 17 (see page 8), a pane of 18 with the lower left stamp missing. It is odd but this large piece has no extra frame lines. It is cancelled "Corte" 20—12—1844". [As can be see in the photo here, the date is 30-12-1844. JFD.]

The next in size is one of 12 (6x2) cancelled "Corte". A block of 9 (3x3) cancelled "Corte" 30—12—1844. A block of 8 with frame at left and bottom, a block of four with frame at bottom, one with frame at top,

one with frame at right and bottom and one without frame all five blocks cancelled "Cidade de Nictheroy". Two other blocks exist, one of six with frame at top left and bottom cancelled "IQUASSA" and a block of four without extra frames postmarked "CEARA".

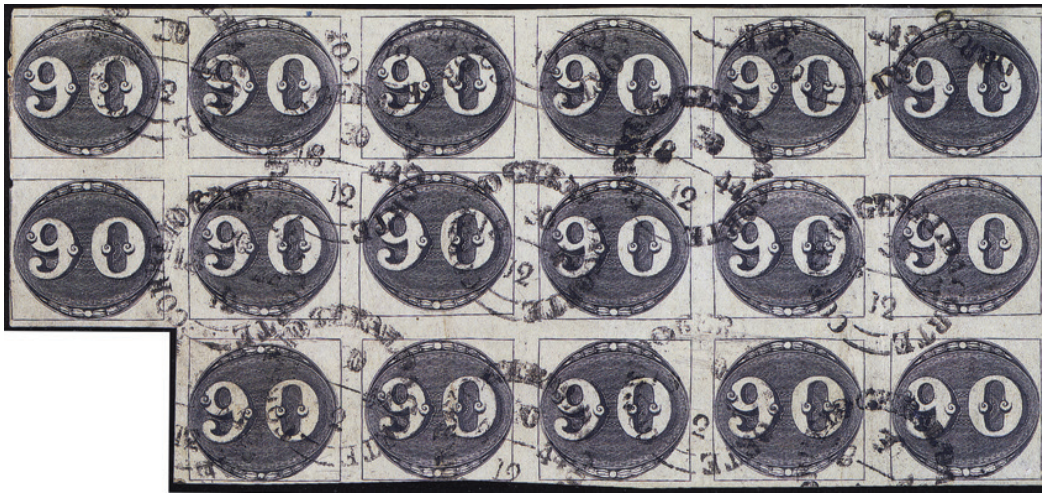
The collections of the world showing these three blocks used or unused could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Mr. Paulo Ayres in his excellent recently published book on early Brazilian cancellations lists 101 different postmarks on the Bulls Eyes. He does not mention colors but we have noted "Pati do Alfereo" in red, "Grampara" and "Corte" in magenta, "Campina" in both green and in brown and "Santos" in blue. Black is the common postmark.

Bulls Eyes on cover are rather scarce especially when on the front. They are generally found on the back (see page 5), used to seal the letter and quite often are torn when the letter is opened. There is a small insect of some kind in Brazil that seems to thrive on these early covers for it is not unusual to find them with dozens of small holes.

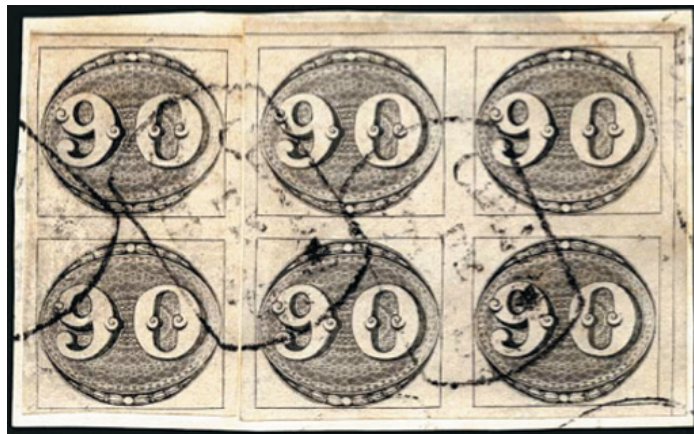
Col. G. S. F. Napier in his excellent book published in 1923 on the First Issue of Brazil describes the plate of 60 of the 30R Bulls Eye, but unfortunately there were no large blocks or strips in the Brazilian collection, now being broken, to prove the existence of such a plate. In fact, we know of no block or strip containing a row of four or more stamps in a vertical row. Such a piece would prove in itself without the official records that plates containing more than the usual pane of eighteen [3 vertical rows x six] 30R were made.

We described in previous paragraphs that three such blocks of the 60R exist which prove the larger plate of this stamp. One of these was an unused block of twenty and the other two used blocks of twenty and thirteen.

Col. Napier suggests that there was a plate of 54 of the 30R made up of three panes of 18 subjects, but there are no records to prove such suggestion. Mr. Jose Klobe in a paper read before the meeting of The San Paulo Philatelic Society on January 11, 1923, stated that the records show three plates were made of mixed values of fifty-four stamps, eighteen



The 'Newbury Block' of 17 of the 1843 60Reis, Scott 3,
all cancelled by "Correio Geraldorte/30.12.1844" circular date stamps



90r Intermediate Impression, marginal block of four and vertical pair
lightly tied to fragment by "CIDADE DE NICTHEROY" cancels, from
second composite plate, state A, positions 4/10 (pair) and 5-6/11-12
(block), also with pane margin lines complete at top and right.

each of the three values, one plate of sixty 30R and two plates of sixty 60R. Col. Napier mentions but two mixed plates of fifty-four each in four states of the plate. Quite possibly, three plates were made and something happened to the third plate before being used. Then, too, it may not have been satisfactory and was condemned before going to press.

The large block which we previously described, namely: the block of twenty unused 60R is from the first plate of sixty subjects and contains positions 9 to 12, 15 to 18, 21 to 24, 27 to 30 and 33 to 36. An off-hand check with Col. Napier's plate shows that his illustrations for positions 22, 24, 28, 29, 30 and 34 are incorrectly placed.

Reading over the information which is now available on this first issue, we are led to believe that much is still to be done in reconstructing these plates. The work should not be difficult if the material is available for the frame lines were undoubtedly engraved separately from the central oval and their relations to the oval differ on almost every stamp. We note on the block of twenty of the 60R that every stamp from numbers 15 to 18 show a position dot immediately above the center or the top frame line which leads us to believe that all stamps in the third horizontal row of this sheet show such an oddity. We do not note this dot in this position on any of the other stamps.

The 60R from the two composite plates have been satisfactorily plated, no doubt, due to the blocks available but certainly as much cannot be said for the 30R and the 60R. Records show that the number of stamps delivered were: 1,148,994 of the 30R; 1,502,142 of the 60R and 349,182 of the 60R.

The stamps are believed to have been engraved at the Mint in Brazil.

The dies are supposed to have been produced in New York or London. Ninety-five years is a long time back and unfortunately, the records of that period are not as complete as one might wish.

Evidently the first issue or so-called Bull's-Eyes proved to be too large and bulky for general use. The sheets of sixty were too large to be conveniently handled by the postal clerk and the panes of eighteen were too small for those buying in quantities. Then, too, large blocks of the 60Reis had to be used to pay required postage in some cases so that new and higher denominations were required.

Since our recent notes on the first issue Bull's Eyes we have seen two additional blocks which we have not heretofore recorded. These are both in the wonderful collection of Brazil belonging to Mr. Saul Newbury. They are of the 60Reis denomination. One, a [used] block of four with extra lines at top and left. The second [used] block is one of six.

Additional Information not part of the Ward article:

G. S. F. Napier, in *The Stamps of the First Issue of Brazil*, outlined the various printing configurations of the Bull's Eyes stamps, as follows:

Composite Plate (30/60/90r): 54 subjects arranged in three panes of 18 each (6 x 3), top 30r, middle 60r, bottom 90r, each pane surrounded by a complete outer frameline, the panes of 18 separated by a horizontal gutter and interpanneau dividing line.

30r Large Plate: 60 subjects arranged in one pane (6 x 10); the pane surrounded by one continuous outer frameline.

60r Large Plate: 60 subjects arranged in one pane (6 x 10); the pane surrounded by one continuous outer frameline.

30r Small Plate: 54 subjects arranged in three panes of 18 (6 x 3), each pane surrounded by one continuous outer frameline, the panes separated by a horizontal gutter.

From the Siegel Auction Galleries introduction to the "Islander" Brazil Collection, covered in one of our viewings: The first stamps of Brazil were authorized by government decree on November 29, 1842. Postage rates were established for land and sea routes: 60 reis for a letter carried by land weighing up to 4 oitavas (an old measure of weight, roughly equal to one half-ounce), and double the land rate for mail carried by ship. The land rate increased at 30-reis increments for each additional 2 oitavas (quarter-ounce), and the sea rate increased at 60-reis increments.

Therefore, the three stamp denominations required by the 1842 postal reform were 30, 60 and 90 reis. Government officials ordered production of the stamp plates on February 23, 1843, and, just two months later, on April 29, the first plate was finished and presented along with proof impressions to the President of the Treasury by the Comptroller of the Mint.

The remarkable Bull's Eye stamps, named for their large oval shape, were designed without the country's name or a portrait of the Monarch. The Comptroller, in a letter to the President of the Treasury, expressed his rationale for deciding against imitating Great Britain's use of a royal portrait. He claimed that it was disrespectful to place the Monarch's portrait on "things, which by their character, invariably become waste," and he expressed concern that forgery would be easier with stamps bearing a well-known portrait. In place of a portrait, each of the Bull's Eye stamps presents a large numeral surrounded by spiraling lathework, an anti-counterfeiting measure patented by Perkins, Bacon & Company of England. The engraving was executed in Brazil by the Mint on a machine seized by Brazilian Customs in 1841.