

The Medio Peso Rose Red Error



Lot 255



Lot 256

History of The Medio Peso Rose Red Error

The best-known and most valuable of Peru's early issues is the Medio Peso Error. The seventeen lots of the Medio Peso Error in the Islander collection constitute the most significant offering of these rarities ever made at auction or by private sale. The important Medio Peso Error pieces which were part of the Joseph Schatzkes collection were acquired by Islander in 1971 when the Schatzkes collection was offered privately. However, even the great Schatzkes collection lacked a few of the important pieces offered in this sale, such as the "Small Weinberger Block" (lot 256), which was missing from the philatelic scene for decades, until portions of the Consul Weinberger collection emerged from safe deposit boxes and were sold at auction.

THE CAUSE OF THE MEDIO PESO ERROR

The Medio Peso Error is usually described as a "color error," but actually resulted from the erroneous transfer of Medio Peso designs on the lithographic stone for the One-peseta. The printer consistently used yellow ink for the Medio Peso and red ink for the One-peseta. However, since the stone of the One-peseta included at least five Medio Peso transfers, the resulting Medio Peso stamps were printed in red, not yellow.

According to specialists, the first reports of the error appeared in June 1858, and post offices were instructed to treat the Medio Peso stamps printed in red as the normal One-peseta. The decree of June 18, 1858, declared the Medio Peso value unnecessary, and the government stopped distributing the sheets printed in yellow. This might have been part of an effort to control the situation involving the errors.

A similar error occurred in Colombia, but blue was used for both the 5-centavos and 20-centavos, so the 5-centavos stamps printed from the transfer error on the 20-centavos stone are only obvious from se-tenant multiples. Sixty years later in the United States, the same mistake was made by the platemaker entering engraved subjects on one of the 2-cent plates of the Washington-Franklin series, which resulted in the 5-cent error printed in red instead of blue.

THE ONE-PESETA LITHOGRAPHIC STONE

The exact composition of the One-peseta stone is not known, and it is possible more than one printing stone was used. However, by studying examples of the Medio Peso Error, specialists have deduced that at least one of the 10-subject *bloc reports* erroneously included a row of five of the Medio Peso denomination (see diagram on page 34). Some specialists believe that the *bloc report* containing the Medio Peso errors was transferred to either row 8, 10, 12 or 14 on a stone of 160 subjects. Without knowing the stamps' exact location in a printed sheet, examples of the Medio Peso Error are identified by the transfer types (Types A, B, C, D and E).

The normal One-peseta *bloc report* consisted of two horizontal rows of five, all of the same denomination, which philatelists have classified as ten different numbered types, based on tiny distinguishing marks in each transfer. The correct arrangement of the types in the *bloc report* became known after the type numbers were assigned, which accounts for the non-sequential order of the *bloc report* (top row 10-1-4-7-3, bottom row 5-2-8-6-9).

The se-tenant Medio Peso Error block offered in lot 256, known as the "Small Weinberger Block," reveals something interesting about the *bloc report* that produced it. The two errors, identified as Types C and D, are the third and fourth positions in the bottom row of the 10-unit *bloc report*. Normally, the stamps above these two positions in the *bloc report* would be Types 4 and 7. However, the Types are 8 and 6, which indicates that Types 5-2-8-6-9 were in the top row of the error *bloc report* rather than their normal position at the bottom. This means that not only were the five Medio Peso denominations transferred to the stone, but the entire *bloc report* of ten was uniquely configured with the bottom row positioned at the top and the error transfers at the bottom.

The best reference to the Medio Peso error is the Percy Bargholtz handbook, *PERU: The 1858 Medio Peso Error of Colour, An Inventory*, published by Brian Moorhouse in March 2001. The ownership history and census numbers used in this sale catalogue come from the Bargholtz handbook.

THE MEDIO PESO ERROR COMBINATION COVER



255

255° ✉ **1858, Medio Peso Rose Red Error (5)**. Type E, large margins to ample at bottom left, used with **horizontal pair of 1858 1d Blue (3)**, Types 6-7, large margins, all tied by "YCA" dotted oval cancel on blue folded cover to S. S. Tomas LaChambre y Ca. in Lima, docketed with September 5, 1858 origin date, lightly cleaned and pressed

EXTREMELY FINE. THIS SPECTACULAR COVER BEARS THE ONLY RECORDED TWO-COLOR FRANKING WITH THE MEDIO PESO ERROR. IT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT COVER OF PERUVIAN PHILATELY AND ONE OF THE ARISTOCRATS OF SOUTH AMERICAN PHILATELY.

According to the Percy Bargholtz booklet on the Medio Peso Error, the first report of the error occurred in June 1858, about three months after the March 10, 1858, issue date of the first official government postage stamps. Bargholtz cites the generally-accepted statement that postmasters were instructed to treat the Medio Peso error as a One-peseta stamp, but he also notes that a few covers appear to have required the half-peso denomination and were accepted as such.

The cover offered here was posted in September 1858, months after the errors were discovered. It is probably franked for the double rate of two pesetas with the Medio Peso Error counted as a One-peseta stamp. The Bargholtz census of Medio Peso Error covers lists all of the covers which were known to him in 2001. Only this cover bears the Medio Peso Error in combination with a stamp other than the One-peseta Rose Red.

Bargholtz Census Da1. Ex Magonette and Schatzkes. E. 75,000-100,000

THE “SMALL WEINBERGER BLOCK”



256

10	1	4	7	3	Normal
5	2	8	6	9	
5	2	8	6	9	Error
A	B	C	D	E	

Diagram of the Small Weinberger Block's location on the two adjoining *bloc reports*.

256°田 **1858, Medio Peso Rose Red Error (5).** Vertical block of six containing **two Medio Peso errors se-tenant with four of the normal One-peseta**, the bottom four stamps come from the error *bloc report* with One-peseta Types 8-6 above the two Medio Peso Types C-D, the top pair comes from another *bloc report* with One-peseta Types 8-6 repeated—an unusual configuration, which is explained more thoroughly on page 32 and below—large margins to ample at bottom, two strikes of “TRUJILLO” straightline, pressed-out horizontal crease between stamps at bottom, three tiny pinholes, truly insignificant flaws and otherwise in excellent condition

VERY FINE APPEARANCE. BY FAR THE FINER OF TWO RECORDED SURVIVING BLOCKS CONTAINING THE MEDIO PESO ERROR (THE OTHER IS OFFERED IN THE FOLLOWING LOT). THIS EXTRAORDINARY MULTIPLE IS WIDELY REGARDED AS THE MOST IMPORTANT OFF-COVER PIECE OF PERUVIAN PHILATELY, AND IT IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE ARISTOCRATS OF SOUTH AMERICAN PHILATELY.

The make-up of the lithographic stone which produced the 1858 One-peseta is not known with certainty. However, by studying examples of the Medio Peso Error, specialists have deduced that at least one of the 10-subject *bloc reports* erroneously included a row of five of the Medio Peso denomination. The normal One-peseta *bloc report* consisted of two horizontal rows of five, all of the same denomination, which philatelists have classified as ten different numbered types, based on tiny distinguishing marks in each transfer. The correct arrangement of the types in the *bloc report* became known after the type numbers were assigned, which accounts for the non-sequential order of the *bloc report* (top row 10-1-4-7-3, bottom row 5-2-8-6-9).

Apart from the obvious philatelic importance of this se-tenant Medio Peso Error block, it also tells us something about the *bloc report* that produced it. The two errors, which are called Types C and D, are the third and fourth positions in the bottom row of the 10-unit *bloc report*. Normally, the stamps above these two positions in the *bloc report* would be Types 4 and 7. However, the Types are 8 and 6, which indicates that Types 5-2-8-6-9 were in the top row of the error *bloc report* rather than their normal position at the bottom. This means that not only were the five Medio Peso denominations transferred to the stone, but the entire *bloc report* of ten was uniquely configured with the bottom row positioned at the top and the error transfers at the bottom.

continued

Lot 256 continued

For many years, no one knew the whereabouts of the remarkable block of six offered here, which is known as the “Small Weinberger Block.” We quote directly from the Bargholtz handbook on the Medio Peso error: “The earliest mention found of this block was in a 1930 publication *Etudes Philateliques* by Didier Darteyre, who illustrated it together with the Ferrari block and stated that the new block had recently been offered for sale by the German auction firm H. Kohler. Subsequently, in 1931, Hall mentioned that the block belonged to one of Mr. Kohler’s customers, Mr. Alfred Weinberger from Czechoslovakia. An illustration of the block was also included in Hall’s article mentioned above. After this, the block disappeared and was not seen or heard of again until 1997, when it was offered as lot 245 in the Harmers of London auction on 24 July together with some other material from the Consul Weinberger estate.”

The “Large Weinberger Block,” which included two Medio Peso Errors se-tenant with sixteen One-Peseta in a tall vertical block, no longer exists. It was also mentioned in the 1931 article by Hall, but sometime between then and 1959, it was cut down into two se-tenant strips of three (Types A/10/5 in one strip and B/1/2 in the other, both of which are now in the Jaretsky collection of Peru). The only other block containing the Medio Peso Error is the ex-Ferrary block offered in the following lot. Although a rare artifact, the Ferrary block’s condition cannot compare to the “Small Weinberger Block” offered here.

Bargholtz Census A2. Ex Consul Weinberger. Offered publicly in this sale for only the third time in approximately 80 years. E. 75,000-100,000

THE FERRARY BLOCK

5	2	8	6	9	Error
A	B	C	D	E	
10	1	4	7	3	Normal
5	2	8	6	9	

Diagram of the Ferrary block’s location on the two adjoining *bloc reports*.



257

257°田 **1858, Medio Peso Rose Red Error (5).** Vertical block of six containing **two Medio Peso errors se-tenant with four of the normal One-peseta**, the top two Medio Peso Types A-B come from the error *bloc report*, the bottom block of four One-peseta Types 10-1/5-2 comes from another *bloc report*, cancelled by four strikes of “PIURA” straightline, faults include piece missing from one Medio Peso and partial rebacking

ONE OF TWO SURVIVING SE-TENANT BLOCKS CONTAINING THE MEDIO PESO ERROR. AN IMPORTANT PHILATELIC ARTIFACT AND EXHIBIT-WORTHY DESPITE FAULTS.

Bargholtz Census A1. Ex Ferrary, Hall, Nosiglia and Schatzkes. E. 7,500-10,000