TINTUREIRO INVERTS

Ken Deaver

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The *Tintureiro* issue of 1891 occurs as an inverted frame version. There are at least six varieties of the inverted frame. The following article attempts to describe these varieties along with their locations on the sheet, and how they came to be inverted. Advice and comments are sought from other Tintureiro collectors.

BACKGROUND

The *Tintureiro* issue of 1891 (Scott #109, RHM #79) was the first bi-color stamp locally printed in Brazil. It was produced at the Mint with letterpress (typographic) printing. Printing of the stamp required two plates: one to print the blue elements (frame, text, and ornamentation), and the other for the red elements (vignette of Lady Liberty and a number of fine lines). Each plate consisted of 100 cliches, individual copies of the red or blue components of the design. The full set of 100 cliches was bound together to form the total plate (red or blue).

During the printing process a cliché was occasionally damaged or severely worn and had to be removed and repaired or replaced. Belarmino Pinheiro noted that the individual electrotypes (clichés) sometimes retained ink and had to be removed to be cleaned (Bezerra and Ribeiro 1996:125-6). When a cliché was removed from the plate for repair or cleaning it needed to be replaced in exactly the same position and orientation from which it was taken. However, occasionally it was replaced upside down. When the refurbished plate was then used to print a sheet, it produced 99 stamps in the normal orientation along with one stamp with an upside down (inverted) frame (if the inverted cliché was on the blue plate) or an inverted vignette (if the inverted cliché was on the red plate).

Once the stamps of a sheet are separated it really isn't possible to determine if an invert is an inverted frame or an inverted vignette. On a single stamp an inverted frame will look like the "REIS" is upside down and at the top rather than the bottom of the stamp when the head is in the normal orientation (facing right). However if one rotates the stamp 180 degrees, it will look like the frame is normal and the vignette is upside down and facing left. Consequently it is safer to refer to a single stamp with the generic term "invert". An invert is merely a stamp where the clichés at a particular position are facing different directions on the two plates.

Only when the invert occurs in a pair (RHM 79T) or large block attached to a normal stamp(s) is it safe to identify it as an inverted frame or inverted vignette. Virtually all *Tintureiro* inverts are probably inverted frames based on examination of pairs and multiples where inverts occur attached to normal stamps. However, at least one true inverted vignette in a block of 9 has been shown at large International shows so one cannot identify the inverted element with certainty on a single stamp.

COLORS, PAPERS & PERFORATIONS

Inverts occur most commonly on stamps printed in ultra and red colors. Inverts in blue and red are less common. This article is based on the examination of 71 inverts and frequencies are calculated as percentages of the review sample of 71. About 70% of the inverts in this sample are ultra and red while 30% are printed in some shade of blue. Inverts have not been reported in "greenish blue", but *Tintureiros* were printed is a wide variety of shades between blue and "greenish blue" and it is likely that examples in other collections could be classified as "greenish blue". No examples have been seen or reported of inverts with the red plate printed in carmine rose despite the occasional use of this color for normal Tintureiros.

Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:132) reported "inverted figurines" (their name for all inverts) on all types of paper except paper E. They specifically mention inverts on papers D, F, and G. This is compatible with Napier's findings (reported in Meyer 1943:207-8) that virtually all inverts occur in his Second (papers B, C, D) and Fourth (papers F, and G) printings. The inverts printed in ultra and red are compatible with

papers F and G and the description of Napier's Fourth printing. Likewise the blue and red inverts occur on papers B, C, and D and indeterminate paper types and the description of Napier's Second printing. Inverts don't occur on paper types A or E or resemble Napier's First or Third printing with the possible exception of Invert Type 4 described later.

Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:132) state inverts occur with perforations 11 and 13. This is in line with the frequent descriptions of *Tintureiro* perforations as "coarse" (11 or 11.5) and "fine" (12.5 to 14). By the beginning of 1890 the Mint had perforating machines that produced fine and coarse perforations (Bezerra and Ribeiro 1996:24), but the fine perforations were preferred. Inverts with fine perforations constitute 90% of those examined while coarse perforations make up 10%. Inverts with mixed perforations (coarse perforations on the top and bottom and fine perforations on the sides) occur but are very rare (1 of 71 examined). Likewise inverts with double perforations are very unusual.

There are no obvious correlations between perforation gauges and color or paper type. Perforating sheets of stamps is a separate process from printing. It involves different steps and machinery. Therefore it shouldn't be surprising that coarse and fine perforations occur independent of color or paper type.

VARIETIES OF INVERTS

In 1911 and 1912 Napier (Aug. Nov. 1911, Jan.1912) published several accounts of *Tintureiros* with special attention to errors and plate varieties of inverts and tete-beches. He identified three specific plate varieties of inverts all printed during his Fourth printing in ultra and red. Meyer's (1943:206) summary of Napier's articles illustrates the three varieties. They are based on the presence or absence of small blue lines in various positions between the head and the red octagon frame.

Type 1 Inverts: Inverted frame with a small horizontal blue dot just touching the red octagon at chin level (Figure 1) (3 examples reviewed—See Table 1). The small blue dot is diagnostic for this type, but three other faults also occur on the red plate in all examples examined. There is a diagonal scratch in the red lines of the lower face running from the back of the mouth to the jawline. There is also an irregular area in the octagon just in front of the bangs on the vignette, and there is a gap of 2-4 red lines just above and to the left of the upper right rosette.

Invert Type	Number Examined
1	3
2	4
3 (ultra)	15
3 (blue)	18
4	0
5	27
6	4
Total	71

Table 1
Frequencies of Invert Types

Type 2 Inverts: Inverted frame with a small vertical blue dash inside octagon opposite mouth and at level of third blue square from bottom (Figure 2) (4 examples reviewed). In addition to Napier's diagnostic vertical blue dash, there is also a very small blue dot over the "E" in "CORREIO".

Type 3 Inverts: Napier identified a third type as an invert with neither the dot not dash of the first two types (Figure 3). Plain inverts may be printed in ultra and red or blue and red. This type of invert is relatively common with 15 examples of the ultra subtype and 18 examples of the blue subtype examined.

Two faults occur on Type 3 inverts. The first is a vertical scratch on the red plate cutting the head from the beret to the jawline. It is only seen on examples of the ultra subtype and is faint and not always visible on heavily inked examples. The second fault is on the blue plate and is the absence of the line connecting the medial side of the blue squares on the right side of the stamp (Figure 4). This fault occurs on examples of the blue subtype.

Examples of the blue subtype are usually printed in light blue and are mostly used (80%) whereas examples of the ultra subtype are ultramarine and more sharply and precisely printed. Only about half of the ultra subtype are used.

Type 4 Inverts: Napier (Nov. 1911:273) also described a fourth variety of invert, and it is illustrated in Meyer (1943:206). This type was from his first printing (blue and red colors on thick unwebbed paper) and consists of three small blue marks: 1. A thin blue vertical line between the back of the head and the vertical octagon line, 2. A bent blue line between the fold of the beret and the diagonal octagon line, and 3. A diagonal blue line between the eye and the vertical octagon line. He found this type of invert and a normal stamp with exactly the same placement of the three blue lines and felt this result-

ed from..."an entire sheet being printed with the frame reversed" (Nov. 1911:273). Unfortunately he didn't account for the fact that the three blue lines were printed with the same plate as the frame, and inverting the frame would have inverted the lines as well. Consequently the two stamps with apparently identical faults could not have been printed with the same cliché.

However he did identify another variety of invert, one which has never been described before or since. It appears to have been printed during his First printing and was corrected quickly. It is defined by the three blue lines.

Type 5 Invert: Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:132-3) mention another variety of invert (Figure 5). They describe it as a "white defect" of the frame occurring in Area 1 of the inverted frame, which corresponds to Area 4 of the normal stamp. It consists of a defect (white blotch) on the top edge of the rosette and a white isosceles triangle penetrating into the rosette. They further note that this fault also occurs on normal stamps.

Further examination indicates that several other faults always co-occur on this type of invert. In addition to the white blotch and thin triangle there is a white vertical line through the blue square medial of the "IL" of "BRAZIL", a white vertical line from the knob of the channel to the blue square above the first "0" of "100", a thin vertical scratch in the bangs on the Liberty figure's forehead, and a vertical blue dash between the chin and the octagon just below the level of the third blue square from the bottom.

All of the examples of this invert type (27 of 71) are on papers F or G (Napier's Fourth printing) and are printed in ultra and red.

Type 6 Inverts: A final variety of invert exists and is always printed in blue and red, although some examples are very dark blue, approaching ultra. Rather than a set of isolated faults this variety has a distinctive appearance all over (Figure 6). It appears heavily overinked on the blue plate with small enclosed spaces nearly filled. All letters and squares are fuzzy with rough edges, and the blue squares are mottled with tiny white spots. The red plate is printed normally and lacks the heavy overinking and fuzzy edges. This type of invert is printed on a fibrous hard paper with weak or absent web (paper types B, C, D) and came from Napier's Second printing.

OTHER FAULTS ON INVERTS

A number of other faults occur on inverts. These include scratches, white dots and line breaks on the vignette plate, and small white dots on the frame plate. However all of the faults occur as isolated examples and show no recurring patterns sufficient to describe new types or co-occurring attributes on the types described here. Indeed it is surprising how few faults occur other than those that are diagnostic of the invert type. In particular, faults are rare on the late ultra and red inverts (Invert Types 1, 2, 5) and this could be a response to the philatelic demand for sharper, better printed material.
The faults that are the defining attributes for several of the invert types also occur individually or in evolving form on normal stamps. The blue dot opposite the chin that defines Invert Type 1 occurs on the boundary of Areas 12 and 20. On normal stamps this fault presents as a slightly fatter blue dot on the boundary of Areas 9 and 17, the inverse of the location where it is seen on the invert. This may indicate that the fault existed on the blue cliché before or, more likely after it was inverted.

The same situation occurs with Invert Type 2. It is defined on the basis of a small vertical dash in front of the chin in Area 20. In the inverted position in Area 17 various forms of blue lines and broken vertical dashes occur on normal stamps. One or more could be stamps printed with the inverted blue cliché repositioned to the normal orientation.

The faults that define and co-occur on Invert Type 5 definitely occur on normal stamps. Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:109) describe the defective edge of the rosette as a fault seen on normal stamps which is..."repeated in some inverted design stamps in the position of Area 1." Some normal stamps display early stages of this defect. Figure 7 is a blue/red normal stamp with the "defective edge" (white blotch) below the bottom right rosette along with the base of the thin triangle, but lacking the rest of the triangle and all other attributes described for Invert Type 5. The damage continued to develop on the plate, and examples exist of ultra/red stamps in normal orientation that display three of the five attributes of Invert Type 5 (Figure 8).

The presence of some of the defining attributes on a blue/red normal stamp (Napier's Second printing) suggests that the faults that are present on Type 5 inverts were starting to develop on a cliché before their full expression in Napier's Fourth printing. It

appears that the damaged cliché continued to be used for normal stamps from Napier's Second printing into Napier's Fourth printing. Over this time it picked up additional damage. During Napier's Fourth printing this cliché was somehow inverted and placed in a position where the corresponding red cliché had a scratch on the bangs of the Liberty head. Then a number of Type 5 inverts were printed.

POSTMARKS: PERIOD OF USE

Unlike tete-beches, many inverts were used postally. Rose (2010: p.c.) estimates that 40-50 covers with inverts still exist today, and many single inverts bear postmarks. Thirty-five of the 71 inverts examined are cancelled and 25 of the 35 bear cancellations with readable dates (at least month and year).

The earliest dates on the 35 readable cancellations are 11Jun91, 20Oct91, and 3Jan92, but these three are very puzzling because they are all printed in ultra and red. The use of ultra did not occur until some time in the summer of 1892 (on paper type F or Napier's Fourth printing). Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:139) say the oldest cancellation on papers F or G, in ultramarine, is 7July92. Napier (1940:132) proposes a similar start date and adds an interesting aside, "The Fourth and last printing, in ultramarine, appeared in August 1892, although I have a copy clearly obliterated November 6, 1891"

One explanation might be that most ultra stamps were printed during or after the summer of 1892, but a few sheets of this color were printed earlier. Given the number of different shades of blue and even red ink used to print *Tintureiros*, it is possible that a dark blue/ ultramarine shade was used for a very small number of sheets in 1891.

Alternately some of the early dates on ultra stamps could be mistakes of cancellation. Such mistakes are common on *Tintureiros* and include cancels as early as 1890 before the issue was even conceived. However this is unlikely to explain away all of the early ultra dates because one example examined (20Oct91) is on cover with an arrival cancel of 13Nov91). Other than the three puzzling cancels on ultra inverts, the earliest date examined is 4Mar92 and the latest date is 18May93.

Although the sample of inverts with readable dates is small, there appear to be different periods of use for the various invert types. The earliest group of inverts is Type 3 (printed in blue/red) with a cluster of dates (n=11) in March and April 1892 and then occasional dates (n=3) trailing out in June, September, and October 1892.

The inverts printed in ultra show dates from June to November 1892: Type 1= 25Sept92, Type 2=31Oct92 and 17Nov92, Type 3 (ultra subtype) =13Jul92, and Type 5= 6Jun92.

Finally Type 6 inverts (again printed in blue/red) show later dates of March and May 1893.

Most inverts with blue frame color are cancelled (19 of 22) while most with ultra frame color are unused (33 of 49). Napier (in Meyer 1943:208) states that inverts occurred in his Second and Fourth printing (except possibly the elusive entire sheet of inverts from his First printing- Type 4). This is compatible with the inverts examined here. Blue and maybe greenish blue inverts occurred during the Second printing. They were largely or completely accidental and were treated like normal stamps. Most (19 of 22) were used postally. The inverted blue cliché that produced the fault was noticed and corrected before the Third printing. Then during the Fourth printing several different frame clichés were inverted, and inverts were again printed, this time mostly with ultra ink. The fact that most ultra inverts are unused (67%) while only 13% of blue inverts are uncancelled suggests that at least some ultra inverts were produced intentionally for "on demand" sale to collectors.

PLATING

Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:132) say..."Thus it is possible that there are inverted figures in any position on the sheet." Meyer (1943:205) adds..."Sheets were produced containing one inverted frame, either two or three inverted frames and no inverts, but one or more tete-beches.". The scarcity of large blocks and multiples makes it very difficult to determine the sheet position of all invert types, but some data are available to aid plating of the types proposed here.

Type 1: These inverts exist with no sheet margins (n=1) so at least some were printed in the interior of the sheet. Some examples (n=2) of this type also display sheet margins on the top. Napier (Jan 1912:7) also found this type with top margins and normal stamps on each side meaning the invert was printed on the top row of the sheet in positions 2....9.

Type 2: Napier (Jan 1912:7) says this invert occurred in the interior of the sheet. A block of 9 stamps with a Type 2 invert in the center was examined. The

block has both top and right sheet margins meaning the invert is in position 19 on the sheet. Bezerra and Ribeiro (1996:132) describe an identical block of 9 stamps from the Mario Branco collection. They also attribute it to position 19.

Type 3: (ultra subtype) This type normally occurs on inverts with no sheet margin (13 of 15) so most examples originated from the interior of the sheet. However there are two Type 3 (ultra) inverts in the sample examined that display sheet margins on the left side of the stamp indicating they were printed on the left column of the sheet in position 11....81.

Type 3: (blue subtype) Napier (Jan1912:6) describes this type as having left margins and occurring on the left column of the sheet in position 11....81. Six of the 18 examples of this type do have left margins and lack top or bottom margins indicating an origin in position 11....81. One block has a top margin indicating an origin in the second row of the sheet in position 12 to 19. Another block has a right margin indicating an origin in the second column from the right in position 19....89. The remaining ten examples lack sheet margins indicating that the invert was from the interior of the sheet.

Type 4: This type is described by Napier (Nov1911:273) in support of his belief that an entire sheet was printed with the frames reversed during the First printing. If that is the case, this type could have come from any position. He doesn't add any details about the example he reported, and no one else mentions the type.

Type 5: This is the most common invert type (n=27) in the sample examined, but none of the examples display a sheet margin so this type occurred in the interior of the sheet.

Type 6: Three of the four examples examined lack sheet margins and came from the interior of the sheet. The fourth example has a top margin indicating an origin in position 2....9.

ACCIDENTAL OR INTENTIONAL ORIGIN

The major authorities on Brazilian philately are not in agreement concerning the origin of *Tintureiro* inverts. Some feel that the inverts came about accidentally when frame clichés were removed for cleaning or repair and were unintentionally replaced upside down (Pinheiro 1938, Bezerra and Ribeiro 1996). Others (Zioni n.d.) describe the appearance of inverts as "shady" and feel they were printed at the request of collectors. Since inverts occur in several varieties/types, in different colors, on different paper types, and in several sheet locations, it seems reasonable that there may have been multiple origins and purposes. It is appropriate to review and summarize the various types chronologically to examine how they came to exist.

The earliest inverts were Type 4, if indeed this type exists. They were printed in blue and red colors on paper type A during Napier's First printing. Based on Bezerra and Ribeiro's (1996:159) estimates of earliest use for each paper type this would suggest a printing date between June and September 1891. Only one used example of this type has ever been described, and there is some confusion what it represents. If Napier's interpretation is correct an entire sheet of inverted frames was printed with three blue frame faults on all sheet positions. Such an event produced an entire sheet of freaks and was surely a mistake that was corrected on the next sheet.

During Napier's Second printing Invert Type 3 (and possibly Type 6) was printed. These occurred on paper types B, C, and D. The examples examined display cancels clustering in March and April 1892 and then trailing out through the fall of 1892 and spring of 1893. They were all printed in blue and red

They occurred in at least four different sheet positions as some have left, right, or top margins and others were from the interior of the sheet. This indicates that a frame cliché was accidentally inverted several times at different positions and probably corrected quickly.

Nineteen of the 22 examples of Type 3 (blue subtype) and 6 were postally used, suggesting that the anomaly was viewed as yet another minor fault on the *Tintureiro* and was not accorded any particular value. Many of the inverts from this period are smeared and blotchy with rough edges (particularly Type 6). The poor condition and appearance also argues for an accidental origin and not intentional printing intended for collectors who would have sought better printed and more precise material.

The period during Napier's Second printing also was when the faults began that later became Type 5 inverts. During this time one frame cliché developed faults including the white blotch and the base of the thin triangle on the bottom of the bottom right rosette. The other faults associated with Type 5 (vertical line in blue square, line from channel knob, blue dash below third square and vertical scratch on the

bangs) had not yet appeared, and the cliché was not yet inverted.

No inverts are known from Napier's Third printing. This printing corresponds to Bezerra and Ribeiro's paper type E (which they say was first used in March 1892). This is the period when tete-beches were printed with the scratch across the head, but inverts have not been identified on this paper.

Napier's Fourth printing corresponds to Bezarra and Ribeiro's paper types F and G. They note that these paper types were first used in July 1892 (1996:159), but numerous cancels of June 1892 were examined (including one invert) on these paper types. Ultra and red were the predominant colors.

At the beginning of June 1892 the frame cliché with the faults that would soon become the attributes of Type 5 inverts was still being used for printing normal stamps. It had been damaged further and now had all of the faults except the ultra dash below the third square. It also was not yet paired with the red cliché bearing the scratch on the bangs.

Type 5 inverts first appeared in June 1892. The earliest date of use in the sample examined is 6Jun1892. The only changes from the earlier normal stamps. are that the frame cliché had picked up an ultra dash below the third square, the frame had been inverted, and the corresponding red cliché had the scratch through the bangs. Twenty-three of the 27 Type 5 examples examined are unused and the printing quality is cleaner and more precise. The dominance of unused stamps and the improved printing quality suggests that many of these inverts were intended for a different purpose, likely the philatelic market.

Types 1, 2,and 3 (ultra subtype) inverts all appeared during Napier's Fourth printing. The earliest cancel is 13July1892 in the sample examined. They are all ultra and red and on paper types F and G. Eleven of the 22 are used. The printing quality is good. These invert types appear to have been printed (cancel dates of July to October 1892) shortly after Type 5 inverts (only cancel date is early June 1892), and some may have been printed for favor. However the percentage of used stamps suggests some were also used for ordinary domestic postage purposes.

The ultra dot that defines Type 1 inverts also occurs on normal stamps. It is in the inverse position (top left octagon) rather than in the inverted position (bottom right octagon). The dot on normal stamps is slightly fatter suggesting that the cliché used to print Type 1 inverts was later reoriented to the normal position, and the damaged area on the cliché had grown with use during Napier's Fourth printing.

Have other Bull's Eyes readers encountered other varieties on *Tintureiro* inverts? Any comments or additional information would be greatly appreciated.

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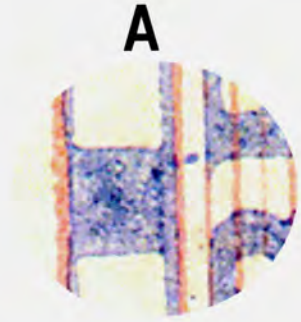
Figure 1: Type 1 Invert

Faults/Attributes

A - Gap in red lines above and to the left of the right rosette.
B - Curving line in octagon in front of bangs.
C - Small horizontal blue dot, just touching octagon at chin level.
D - Diagonal scratch in red lines from back of the mouth to the jawline.

Figure 2: Type 2 Invert

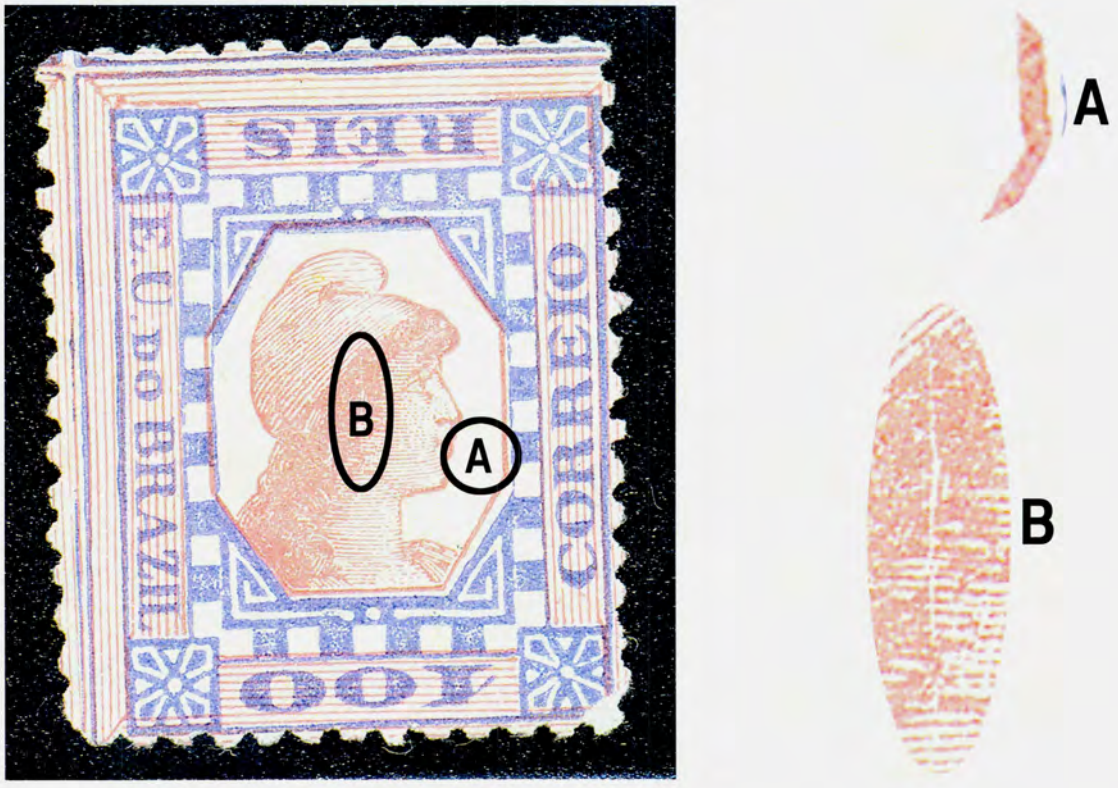


Faults/Attributes

A - Tiny blue dot over "E" in "CORREIO."

B - Small vertical blue dash inside octagon at level of third blue square from the bottom.

Figure 3: Type 3 Invert (ultra subtype)



Faults/Attributes

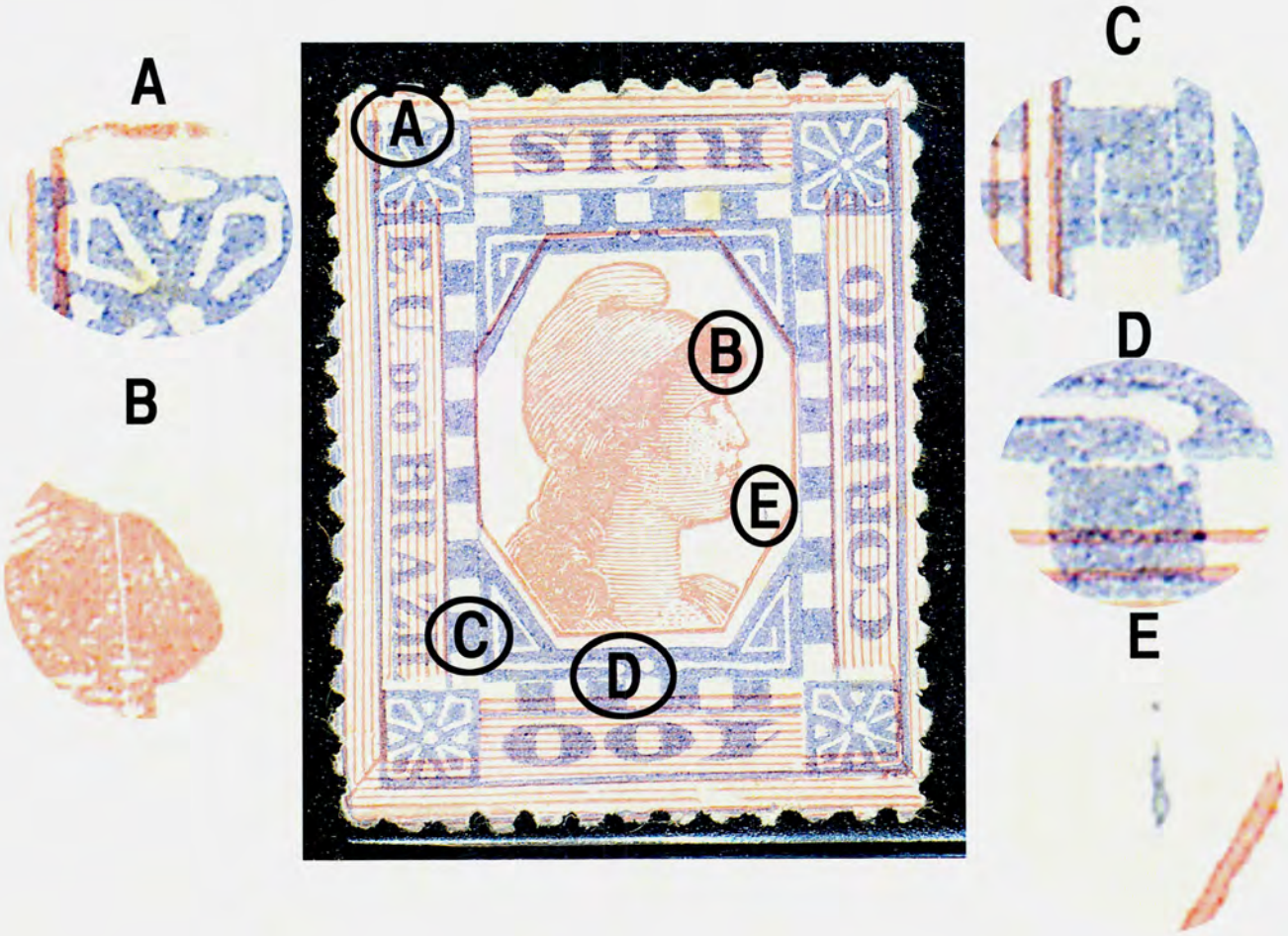
A - No dot or dash inside the octagon.
B - Long vertical scratch cutting the head from the beret to the jawline.

Figure 4: Type 3 Invert (blue subtype)

Faults/Attributes

A - No dot or dash inside the octagon.
B - No line connecting the medial side of blue squares on the right side of the stamp.

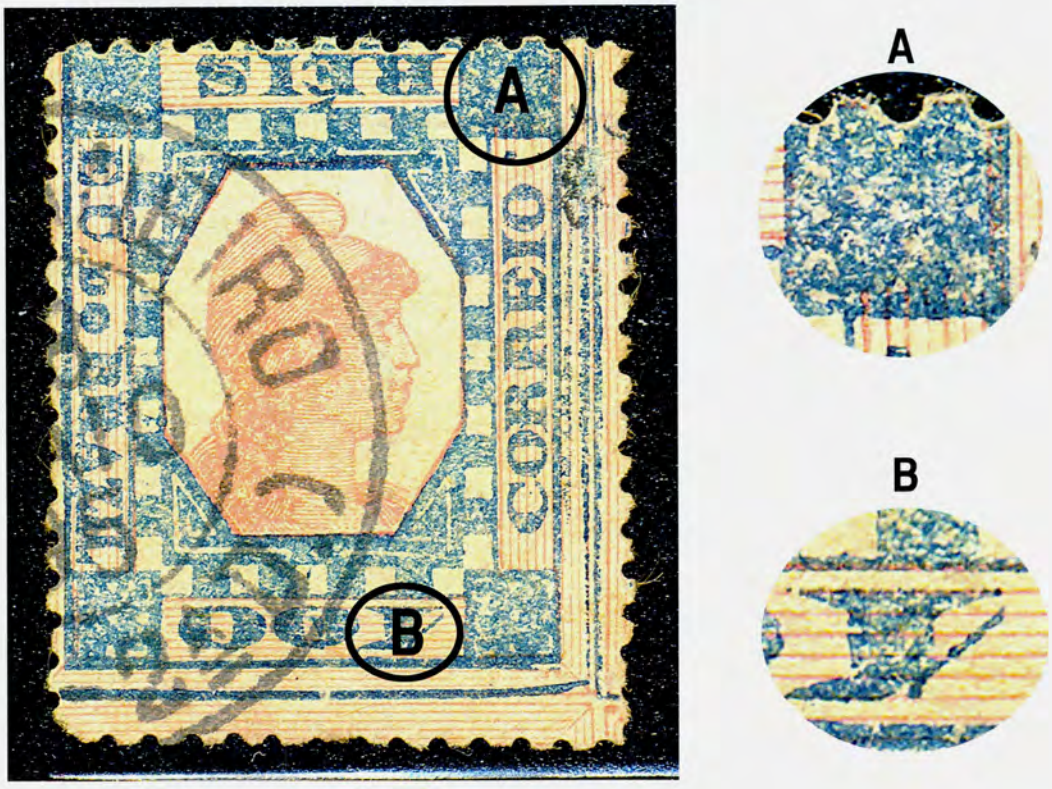
Figure 5: Type 5 Invert



Faults/Attributes

A - White blotch and thin triangle on top of the top left rosette.
B - Vertical scratch in the bangs of the vignette.
C - White vertical line through the blue square medial of the "IL" in "BRAZIL."
D - White vertical line from the knob of the channel to the blue square above the first "0" of "100."
E - Thin vertical blue dash between chin and the octagon.

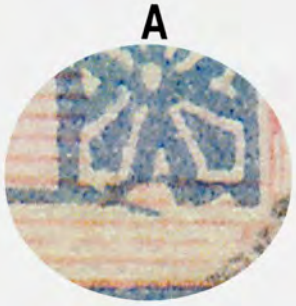
Figure 6: Type 6 Invert



Faults/Attributes

A - Blue plate is heavily overinked resulting in enclosed spaces nearly filled.
B - Letters and squares are fuzzy and have rough edges.

Figure 7: Normal Stamp with Some Attributes of Type 5 Invert



Faults/Attributes

A - White blotch and base of the thin triangle but lacking other attributes of Type 5 Inverts.

Figure 8: Normal Stamp with most of the Attributes of Type 5 Invert

Faults/Attributes

A - White vertical line from knob of the channel to the blue square below the first "0" of "100."

B - White vertical line through the blue square medial of the "IL" in "BRAZIL."

C - White blotch and thin triangle on the bottom right rosette.