BACKGROUND AND HISTORY
The first Official stamps in the world were introduced by Royal Decree dated in Madrid on the 16 March 1854:
1. The franking of official mail is obligatory from the 1st July 1854.
2. A class of stamps will be required different from those used for private letters.
3. The stamps will express, instead of the price, the maximum weight for which each one may be used.
4. Official mail must be presented at a Post Office, and must be directed from and addressed to an Authority, and must not be addressed to a person by his name but by his official designation.
5. Official mail must bear the seal of the sending Authority.
6. Mail addressed to private individuals will not be circulated.
7. Official mail for Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines will be franked in the same manner, and are subject to the same conditions.
8. Official mail from abroad will continue to pay in coin as before.
It is remarkable that stamps were produced without a price indication, something which was not repeated anywhere in the world until more than 100 years later!
It is also remarkable that the Official stamps of Spain were in fact (from 1858) used in four different continents of the world:
Europe (Spain and the Balearic Islands), Africa (Morocco-Ceuta and the Canary Islands), America (Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo), and Asia (the Philippines).
It is also interesting to note that Official mail was marked "S.N." (Servicio Nacional = National Service) in all the countries except Cuba, Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo where it was marked "R.S." (Real Servicio = Royal Service).
The use of these stamps was discontinued as of 1 August 1866, but in Cuba they continued to be used until mid 1868.
Note: The first official stamp produced in the world was, of course, the Great Britain One Penny black "V.R.", but this stamp was never issued or used, so therefore the Spanish official stamps were the first in the world to be used.
A note on condition: As with almost all classic items in Spanish philately, covers are often not complete covers but fronts of covers only (so called "plicas"). The reason for this is that when these items were removed from archives many years ago, it was only the fronts that were released, the rest of the folded letters were kept in the archives.

THE EXHIBIT - PLAN AND DETAILS
This exhibit is a very comprehensive study of the Official stamps and their usage, in Spain as well as in the Territories and Colonies, and it contains a large number of the rarities and unique items from the area.

THE 1854 ISSUE (frame 1)
This issue was only in use for six months and is therefore much scarcer than the 1855 issue. The exhibit starts with the 1854 Official Essay which is rare. There are also two of the three known mixed frankings between the 1854 and 1855 issues, as well as the largest recorded used multiple of the Una Libra, a block of 14. This frame also shows the highest known franking on cover of all the Official issues, 8 pounds and 1½ ounce.

THE 1855 ISSUE (frames 2 to 4)
This issue was in use between 1855 and 1866 and there were many printings with differently coloured papers. Many large multiples and part sheets are shown, as well as on covers. Frame 3 shows "Weights and Rates" including combinations of every half ounce between ½ ounce and 9 ounces and then various rates up to two pounds. There are also three registered covers, including one of two known with a regular stamp paying the registration fee.

MOROCCO, BALEARIC ISLANDS & CANARY ISLANDS (frame 4)
Usage from and to Morocco (Ceuta), the Balearic Islands, and the Canary Islands is shown with many different rates and combinations.

CUBA (frames 5 to 6)
Official stamps were in use from 1858 and many different rates and combinations are shown. The Havana Lithography is shown, all values unused and/or used, as well as five covers including one with four Una Libra. Official covers to Spain, the Canary Islands and Puerto Rico, as well as covers from Spain to Cuba are also included.

SANTO DOMINGO, PHILIPPINES & PUERTO RICO (frame 6)
Santo Domingo was under Spanish rule between 1861 and 1865 and the only known Official cover to the island is shown, as well as the only known use of the Havana Lithography in Santo Domingo. One Official cover from and to the Philippines is shown. Puerto Rico usage shows a number of different combinations and rates including mixed frankings with regular stamps, and one of three known usages of Una Libra in Puerto Rico. Also use to Mallorca and from Spain is included.
1854 ESSAY

Only one essay for the Official stamps is recorded: it was produced in 1854 and was engraved by Bartolomé Corominas, showing the head of Queen Isabella with the words "CORREO OFICIAL" and "1 LIBRA 1854" in the frame. It is only known in green.

1854 COLOUR PROOFS

Unlike the essay, and the 1855 issue, the 1854 issue does not contain the words "Correo Oficial" (Official Mail); it only has the word "CORREOS" (Mail) and the year "1854", as well as the denomination in weight, and looks almost exactly like the regular stamps of 1854. This suggests that the 1854 issue was of a provisional character until the finalized design was produced in 1855. A number of different colour proofs are known; the different denominations were produced in colours different from the colours of the issued stamps. The final stamps, both for the 1854 and 1855 issues, were produced in the following basic colours: Media Onza black on yellow paper; Una Onza black on rose paper; Cuatro Onzas black on green paper; Una Libra black on blue paper.

1854 THE ISSUED STAMPS - THE FIRST ISSUE

1855 COLOUR PROOFS ON WHITE PAPER

1855 THE ISSUED STAMPS - THE SECOND ISSUE
1854 (1 July) MEDIA ONZA (¼ ounce) grey-black to black on pale yellow to yellow paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 678,000. Valid between 1 July and 31 December 1854. Could be used on a letter weighing up to ¼ ounce (14.35 grams).
1854 MEDIA ONZA part sheet of 100 stamps (10 rows of 10 stamps) from the left part of the sheet.
1854 MEDIA ONZA on cover

1854 (17 July) Early use from Sevilla

Early use

1855 First use with 4 cuartos stamp from Jerez de la Frontera to Cadiz

Double used cover (front)

1855 (2 March) Second use with Official stamp from Cadiz
1854 MEDIA ONZA on cover

1859 (14 April) Late use from Madrid taxed “4” cuartos

1855 (7 August) Late use from Cadiz taxed “8” cuartos

Late use untaxed

Late use taxed the single rate

Late use taxed the double rate

1860 (14 May) Untaxed late use from Lerida
1854 MEDIA ONZA on cover - mixed franking with 1855 issue

1855 (14 March) Media Onza (1854) + Una Onza (1855) x3 from Cadiz

Mixed franking 1854 + 1855 issues. Very rare — only three examples recorded!
1854 (1 July) UNA ONZA (1 ounce) grey-black to black on rose to deep rose paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 339,000. Valid between 1 July and 31 December 1854. Could be used on a letter weighing up to 1 ounce (28.7 grams).
1854 UNA ONZA part sheet of 100 stamps (10 rows of 10 stamps) from the right part of the sheet
1854 UNA ONZA on cover

1854 (5 July) Early use from Castropol

1855 (3 April) Late use from Malaga

1854 (2 December) Una Onza + Media Onza from Fecla

Una Onza + Media Onza
1854 UNA ONZA on cover - mixed franking with 1855 issue

Mixed franking 1854 + 1855 issues. Very rare - only three examples recorded!
This is also the highest recorded of all official frankings on cover - being for a package weighing almost 4 kgs!

1855 (March) Una Onza + Media Onza (1854) + Una Libra (1855) block of eight from San Fernando
1854 (1 July) CUATRO ONZAS (4 ounces) black on green paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 218,100. Valid between 1 July and 31 December 1854. Could be used on a letter weighing up to 4 ounces (114.8 grams).
1854 CUATRO ONZAS on cover

1854 (21 March) Date error from Barcelona

1854 (6 July) Early use from Albatara

Early use
1863 (27 February) Late use from Valencia

1863 Cuatro Onzas (x2) late use from Barco de Avila
1854 (1 July) UNA LIBRA (1 pound) black on pale blue to blue paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 117,000. Valid between 1 July and 31 December 1854. Could be used on a letter weighing up to 1 pound (= 16 ounces = 459.2 grams).
SPAIN - OFFICIAL STAMPS

1854 UNA LIBRA on cover

Only one cover (front) is recorded with the 1854 Una Libra stamp, but a few part covers with this stamp are also known.

1854 Part cover with block of 14 - the largest recorded used multiple

Block of 14 - the largest recorded used multiple

1854 Part cover with Una Libra block of 6 + Cuatro Onzas pair + Una Onza Pair

6 Pounds 10 ounces
1855 (1 January) MEDIA ONZA (½ ounce) grey-black to black on pale yellow to yellow paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 39,890,600. Valid between 1 January 1855 and 31 July 1866. Could be used on a letter weighing up to ½ ounce (14.35 grams).
1855 MEDIA ONZA part sheet of 106 stamps (partly folded) from the left part of the sheet
1855 MEDIA ONZA rejected full sheet of 150 stamps (partly folded) showing double printing and paper folds. All stamps crossed through with ink, and with manuscript note: "Cambiense por la arruga que inutiliza varios sellos" (Exchange because of the faults affecting various stamps). UNIQUE.
1855 (17 April) Media Onza from Sevilla

1861 (14 January) Media Onza (x2) from Badajoz
1862 (7 September) Media Onza (x3) from Pamplona

1864 (29 December) Media Onza (x4) from Sevilla
1855 (1 January) UNA ONZA (1 ounce) grey-black to black on rose to salmon to off-white paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 30,760,500. Valid between 1 January 1855 and 31 July 1866. Could be used on a letter weighing up to 1 ounce (28.7 grams).
1866 (12 February) Una Onza from Puente Areas

1863 (27 October) Una Onza (x2) from Cervera
1855 UNA ONZA on cover

1859 (20 February) Una Onza (x3) from Coruña

Una Onza (x3)

1860 (10 November) Una Onza (x4) from Puente Areas

Una Onza (x4)
1855 (1 January) CUATRO ONZAS (4 ounces) black on blue-green to yellow-green paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 10,853,500. Valid between 1 January 1855 and 31 July 1866. Could be used on a letter weighing up to 4 ounces (114.8 grams).
1855 CUATRO ONZAS part sheet of 112 stamps
(partly folded) from the top of the sheet.
This is from an earlier printing plate with margin text:
“Correspondencia oficial. Sellos de cuatro onzas.”
The later printing plate (see previous page) has the text:
“CORRESPONDENCIA OFICIAL.-
Ciento cincuenta sellos de cuatro onzas.”
1866 (17 July) Cuatro Onzas from Casas y Bañez

Cuatro Onzas (x1)

1858 (15 October) Cuatro Onzas (x2) from Barcelona

Cuatro Onzas (x2)
1855 (1 January) UNA LIBRA (1 pound) black on pale blue to blue paper

Engraved by José Pérez Varela and printed in typography by la Fábrica Nacional del Sello in Madrid. Sheet size 150 stamps (10 rows of 15 stamps). Number of stamps printed: 6,740,200. Valid between 1 January 1855 and 31 July 1866. Could be used on a letter weighing up to 1 pound (= 16 ounces = 459.2 grams).
1855 UNA LIBRA on cover

1858 (4 September) Una Libra from Barcelona

Una Libra (x1)

1860 (c) Una Libra (x2) from Almeria

Una Libra (x2)
1855 OFF-SET ON THE REVERSE

All values can be found with an offset of the design on the reverse. This is the result of the printing press having been operated without a sheet of paper inserted, the following sheet then picking up the ink on the reverse.

1/2 onza  1/2 onza  1 onza  1 onza

4 onzas  1 libra  1 libra

1855 PRINTED DOUBLE

One sheet of the Media Onza stamp received a clear double print, the second print being five mm below and one mm to the left of the first print.

1855 PRINTED ON THE GUMMED SIDE

One sheet of the Media Onza stamp was by mistake printed on the gummed side, so that the print is on top of the gum.
1855 CUT TO SHAPE STAMPS

Normally stamps were cut square, but occasionally stamps cut octagonally or ovaly can be found.

1860 (c) Media Onza cut octagonally from Orense

Cut octagonally

1858 (2 July) Una Onza cut octagonally from Daimiel

Cut octagonally

1856 (24 May) Una Onza cut ovaly from Cervera

Cut ovaly
1855 MARGIN COPY STAMPS

1855 Top margin copy from Puente Areas

1856 (20 February) Left margin copy from Madrid

1858 (24 November) Bottom margin copy from Guadalajara
1856 (18 March) Media Onza from Sevilla

1865 (9 October) Una Onza from Barcelona
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1859 (2 June) Media Onza + Una Onza from Coruña

1 ounce

1864 (13 April) Media Onza (x2) + Una Onza from Burgos

2 ounces
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1856 (12 February) Media Onza + Una Onza (x2) from Cadiz

2½ ounces

1856 (18 February) Una Onza (x3) from Lerida

3 ounces
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1858 (1 February) Media Onza + Una Onza (x3) from Sevilla

3½ ounces

1865 (26 March) Cuatro Onzas from Coruña

4 ounces
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1857 (3 December) Media Onza + Cuatro Onzas from Jerez

4 1/2 ounces

1863 (22 March) Media Onza (x2) + Una Onza (x4) from Granada

5 ounces
1856 (6 May) Media Onza + Una Onza + Cuatro Onzas from Almansa, taxed 10 Reales

1855 (6 May) Media Onza + Una Onza + Cuatro Onzas from Almansa, taxed 10 Reales

1855 (5 February) Una Onza (x2) + Cuatro Onzas from Barcelona

5½ ounces

6 ounces
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

6 1/2 ounces
1860 c. (12 September) Media Onza + Una Onza (x2) + Cuatro Onzas from Barcelona

7 ounces
1857 (25 November) Una Onza (x3) + Cuatro Onzas from Madrid
1863 (2 January) Media Onza + Una Onza (x3) + Cuatro Onzas from Valencia

7½ ounces

1860 (c) Cuatro Onzas (x2) on part cover

8 ounces
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1866 (8 May) Media Onza + Cuatro Onzas (x2) from Valencia

1860 (c) Una Onza + Cuatro Onzas (x2) from Albacete

8½ ounces

9 ounces
SPAIN - OFFICIAL STAMPS

1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1863 (24 September) Cuatro Onzas (x3) from Coruña

12 ounces

1865 (3 November) Una Onza (x3) + Cuatro Onzas (x3) from Cadiz

15 ounces
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1856 (20 December) Media Onza + Una Libra from Coruña

16½ ounces

1860 (c) Cuatro Onzas (x4) + Una Libra on part cover

32 ounces
≡ 2 pounds
1855 ISSUE - WEIGHTS AND RATES

1855 (12 August) Una Onza (x2) + Una Libra from Madrid, charged “76” cuartos because it was not addressed to a Government Department

18 ounces
The registration fee during this period was 2 Reales (=17 cuartos) and this fee could either be paid with regular stamps or in cash.

1863 (22 February) Una Onza + 2 Reales paid in cash, from Infantes

Registration fee 2 Reales paid in cash. Very rare!
1863 c (14 September) Una Onza (x24) + Dos Reales (1862-63) from Granada

The registration fee during this period was 2 Reales (=17 cuartos) and this fee could either be paid with regular stamps or in cash.

24 ounces + registration fee
2 Reales paid with regular stamp.
Very rare - only two examples recorded!
The official stamps were not intended for mail abroad, but a few examples are known. The cover below is exceptional since it was forcibly registered in transit because it was found to be in a damaged state.

1865 (1 December) Media Onza (x3) + Una Onza from Valdepeñas to Portugal, registered in transit

The cover was found to be in a damaged state in Barca d’Alva (Portugal) and was therefore registered to avoid further damage. It was signed by the postal official and has registration markings REGISTADA BARCA D’ALVA and PORTO REGISTADA 9.12.65.

This is the only known registered cover with Official stamps sent abroad!
1866 (1 August) - WHAT HAPPENED THEN?

When the Official stamps were withdrawn from service on 31 July 1866, official mail could be sent without using any stamps. But the weight of the letters had to be written on the cover, since this information was still used to charge the postage costs to the various Government Departments.

1867 (25 July) Official letter without stamps but with manuscript “½ onza”

Manuscript “½ ounce”

1867 (25 July) Official letter without stamps but with manuscript “Una onza”

Manuscript “1 ounce”

1867 (1 February) Official letter without stamps but with handstamp “1.ONZA”

Handstamped “1 ounce”
Most of the postal markings used before the introduction of stamps in 1850 were taken out of use when stamps were first issued. However, in some places these old markings were used for a few years after 1850.

1856 (c.) Media Onza from Puente Areas with pre-stamp marking

1857 (5 March) Media Onza from Trives with pre-stamp marking
At times of paper shortage, envelopes were sometimes turned inside out and re-used. Interesting combinations can be found: Official + Official stamps; Official + Regular stamps; Official stamps + no stamps (sometimes taxed).

1860 (10 September) First use with Media Onza from Madrid

1860 (16 September) Second use with Una Onza from Cadiz charged “4” cuartos

1855 (23 December) Second use without stamps from Arcos charged “4” cuartos

1855 (13 December) First use with Media Onza from Cadiz

Double use
Media Onza and Una Onza

Double use
Media Onza and without stamps
1855 ISSUE - DOUBLE USED COVERS

Double use
Media Onza and 1856 4 cuartos

1857 (16 November) Second use with 1856 4 cuartos from Altea

1857 (10 November) First use with Media Onza from Alicante charged "4" cuartos

1860 (8 June) First use with 1860 4 cuartos from Grazalema

Double use
Media Onza and 1860 4 cuartos

1860 (13 June) Second use with Media Onza from Cadiz charged "4" cuartos
1855 ISSUE - DOUBLE USED COVERS

**Double use**
Una Onza (x2) and without stamps

1863 (10 February) First use without stamps from Coruña

1863 (18 February) Second use with Una Onza (x2) from Coruña

1863 (4 December) First use without stamps from Laguardia

1863 (9 December) Second use with Una Onza from Vitoria
Letters with Official stamps were sometimes taxed or charged. The reason for this could either be that the addressee was not authorised to receive official mail, or that the letter was underpaid. Charges were always made in cuartos.

1860 (c) Media Onza from Madrid charged “4” cuartos

1859 (26 October) Una Onza from Burgos charged “4” cuartos

Charged manuscript “4”

Charged handstamped “4 c.”

Charged handstamped “4”

1862 (14 June) Media Onza from Valencia charged “4c.”
1855 ISSUE - CHARGED/TAXED COVERS

1855 (11 November) Media Onza from Sevilla charged “8” cuartos

Charged handstamped “8”

1860 (28 June) Una Onza from Cadiz charged “8” cuartos

Charged handstamped “8”

1855 (20 February) Una Onza from Cadiz charged “16” cuartos

Charged handstamped “16”
Not all Post Offices had Official Stamps in stock all the time. When they were out of stock, Official letters were either sent without stamps, or with regular stamps. The cost was still charged to the sending Government Department.

1859 (16 October) Official cover without stamps from Coruña

1864 (7 May) Official cover without stamps from Caldas de Reis
Certain Government Departments could send their letters without stamps, and charge the cost to their account. These covers have an Abono-marking, normally the letter “A”, stamped on the front of the envelope.

1858 (5 October) Official cover without stamps from Alcanz with “A” marking

Handstamped “A” for Abono

1861 (31 January) Official cover without stamps from Valencia with “A” marking

Handstamped “A” for Abono
OFFICIAL COVERS WITH REGULAR STAMPS

Not all Post Offices had Official Stamps in stock all the time. When they were out of stock, Official letters were either sent without stamps, or with regular stamps. The cost was still charged to the sending Government Department.

1856 (29 July) Official cover with 1856 4 cuartos from Puerto de Santa Maria

1857 (18 April) Official cover with 1856 4 cuartos (x2) from Jerez de la Frontera

1863 (5 May) Official cover with 1862 4 cuartos from Hostalrich

Official cover with 1862 4 cuartos
MOROCCO - CEUTA

Ceuta is a 18.5 km² autonomous Spanish exclave located on the north coast of North Africa, surrounded by Morocco. Ceuta along with the other Spanish exclave Melilla are the only Spanish territories located in mainland Africa. It was regarded as a part of the Cadiz province prior to 1925. Morocco claims Ceuta, along with the Spanish autonomous city of Melilla and a number of Mediterranean islands which border it. Ceuta has been Spanish since 1668.

1865 (3 June) Media Onza from Ceuta

1 ounce from Ceuta

1860 (18 September) Una Onza from Ceuta

1 ounce from Ceuta
1863 (30 June) Media Onza + Una Onza (x2) from Ceuta

2½ ounces from Ceuta

1866 (25 January) Una Onza + Cuatro Onzas from Ceuta

5 ounces from Ceuta
Double use, one from Ceuta

1859 (4 August) First use with Una Onza from Ceuta

1858 (12 November) Una Onza from Toledo to Ceuta

1859 (7 August) Second use with Una Onza from Cadiz

1861 (7 May) Media Onza from Algeciras to Ceuta charged “4” cuartos

½ ounce from Spain to Ceuta
BALEARIC ISLANDS

The Balearic Islands is an archipelago in the western Mediterranean Sea, near the eastern coast of the Iberian Peninsula. The four largest islands are Mallorca, Minorca, Ibiza, and Formentera. The archipelago forms an autonomous community and a province of Spain, of which the capital is Palma. Most of the islands have been Spanish since 1516, but Minorca was occupied by the British until 1802.

1860 (28 February) Media Onza from Palma de Mallorca

1857 (15 September) Media Onza + Una Onza from Ibiza
BALEARIC ISLANDS

1855 (25 August) Cuatro Onzas from Palma de Mallorca to Barcelona

4 ounces from Mallorca to Spain

1855 (23 March) Una Onza (x2) + Cuatro Onza from Mallorca to Madrid

Six ounces from Mallorca to Spain
The Canary Islands is a Spanish archipelago located just off the northwest coast of mainland Africa, 100 km west of the border between Morocco and Western Sahara. The islands are a Spanish Autonomous Community and the larger islands are Tenerife, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Las Palmas, La Gomera, and El Hierro. The islands have been Spanish since 1495, but there have been many attacks on the islands all the way up to about 1800.

1855 (1 March) Media Onza from Las Palmas

1862 (6 July) Media Onza from Santa Cruz de Tenerife

1863 (11 August) Media Onza + Una Onza (x2) from Arrecife, Lanzarote
1866 (7 April) Una Onza from Madrid to Santa Cruz de Tenerife

1 ounce from Spain to Tenerife

1859 (9 June) Cuatro Onzas (x3) from Coruña to Santa Cruz de Tenerife

12 ounces from Spain to Tenerife
Cuba

Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean with Havana being the capital. To the north of Cuba lies the United States and the Bahamas, Mexico is to the west, the Cayman Islands and Jamaica are to the south, and Haiti and the Dominican Republic are to the Southeast. In 1492, Christopher Columbus found and claimed the island for the Kingdom of Spain. Cuba remained a territory of Spain until the Spanish–American War ended in 1898.

1852 (23 August) Forerunner - Official cover marked “De Oficio”

Forerunner - ½ ounce from Havana

Forerunner - 1½ ounce from Guanabacoa

1850 (11 February) Forerunner - Official cover marked “De Oficio” and “1½”
A Royal Decree was issued in Madrid on 23 January 1857, introducing the use of Official stamps in the Colonies (Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines) as of the 1 January 1858. Prior to 1858, Official stamps had only been used in Spain (including its Territories) and on mail sent from Spain to the Colonies. Although the use of Official stamps was discontinued in Spain as of the 1 August 1866, they continued to be used in the Colonies some time after that, and as late as June 1868 the Cuban Postmaster reminded the Post Offices that Official stamps were no longer valid!
1860 (23 December) Media Onza (x2) from Sagua La Grande

1858 (22 February) Una Onza from Guanajay

Early use 1 ounce from Guanajay
CUBA

1860 (21 December) Media Onza + Una Onza from Habana

1½ ounce from Havana

1864 (13 November) Una Onza (x2) from Holguin

2 ounces from Holguin
1868 (18 April) Una Onza (x3) from Manzanillo

Late use
3 ounces from
Manzanillo
CUBA

1858 (20 August) Cuatro Onzas from Cabezas

4 ounces from Cabezas

1860 (23 April) Una Onza + Cuatro Onzas from Matanzas

5 ounces from Matanzas
CUBA

1863 (20 July) Media Onza + Cuatro Onzas (x2) from Habana

1860 (7 December) Una Libra from Marianao

8½ ounces from Havana

1 pound from Marianao Rare!
CUBA

1861 (5 July) Una Onza cut octagonally from San Christoval

**Cut-to-shape stamp**

1860 (2 July) Second use with Media Onza from Habana

1860 (1 July) First use with Una Onza from Matanzas

**Double used cover**
In 1860 the stock of Official stamps in Cuba got exhausted and new stocks from Spain would take months to arrive. To overcome this shortage, a local reprint was produced of all four values, but the printing method for the reprint was lithography rather than the typography used for the original stamps printed in Spain. It is therefore quite easy to separate these reprints from the original prints and most of them are very rare, especially in unused condition and on cover (Cuatro Onzas is not known on cover). In Spanish these reprints are called “Litografiados de Habana”, the Havana Lithography, and the ways to identify them are: 1. Most examples (but not all) have no full stop after the weight; 2. The letters are smaller and closer to the frame; 3. The printing in general is less clear.
1860 (20 September) Media Onza from Guanacaro

Havana printing
½ ounce from Guanacaro

This cover is illustrated in the Edifil stamp catalogue of Spanish Colonies.

1860 (c.) Media Onza from Santa Ana

Havana printing
½ ounce from Santa Ana
SPAIN - OFFICIAL STAMPS

CUBA - THE HAVANA LITHOGRAPHY - UNA ONZA

1864 (1 October) Una Onza cut-to-shape from Bayamo

Havana printing 1 ounce cut-to-shape from Bayamo

1862 (23 February) Una Onza strip of three from Ceiba Mocha

Havana printing 1 ounce strip of three from Ceiba Mocha
1863 (27 June) Una Onza Havana printing + Media Onza Madrid printing from Habana

Havana printing 1 ounce + Madrid printing ½ ounce. Rare!
1860 (31 July) Una Libra (x4, three with and one without full stop) from Habana.

Havana printing 1 pound (x4, three with and one without full stop) from Havana.
Very rare! Only three covers recorded with Una Libra Havana printing!
1860 (October) Media Onza from Habana to Sevilla

1/2 ounce from Havana to Spain

1860 (October) Una Onza from Habana to Barcelona

1 ounce from Havana to Spain
SPAIN - OFFICIAL STAMPS

CUBA - MAIL TO SPAIN AND MALLORCA

1864 (15 November) Media Onza + Una Onza from Habana to Madrid

1½ ounce from Havana to Spain

1859 (12 February) Media Onza from Habana to Palma de Mallorca

½ ounce from Havana to Mallorca
CUBA - MAIL TO THE CANARY ISLANDS

1860 (12 February) Una Onza from Habana to Las Palmas, Canarias

1 ounce from Havana to the Canary Islands

1 1/3 ounce from Havana to the Canary Islands
CUBA - MAIL TO PUERTO RICO

1868 (4 July) Media Onza (x2) from Habana to Puerto Rico

1 ounce from Havana to Puerto Rico

1866 (November) Una Onza from Habana to Puerto Rico via Madrid

1 ounce from Havana to Puerto Rico via Madrid
1855 (18 November) Una Onza from Burgos to Habana

3 ounces from Spain to Havana

1865 (September) Una Onza (3) from Madrid to Habana

Early use 1 ounce from Spain to Havana

1865 (11 November) Cuatro Onzas from Madrid to Habana

4 ounces from Spain to Havana
1861 (31 May) Post Office Receipt for Official Letters handed over to the Post Office in Santiago de Cuba
Not all Post Offices had Official Stamps in stock all the time. When they were out of stock, Official letters were sent without stamps. When the use of Official stamps had been discontinued in 1868, this was also the method used.

1863 (26 October) Official cover without stamps from Nueva Bermeja

1870 (4 February) Official cover without stamps from Arroyo Naranjo
Santo Domingo (now the Dominican Republic) is a nation on the island of Hispaniola, part of the Greater Antilles archipelago in the Caribbean. The western third of the island is occupied by the nation of Haiti. Columbus arrived in 1492 and Santo Domingo became the site of the first permanent European settlement in the Americas. After three centuries of Spanish rule, the country became independent in 1821, but there was a brief return to Spanish rule between 1861 and 1865.

1864 (8 August) Media Onza from Barcelona to Santo Domingo

½ ounce from Spain to Santo Domingo.

Very rare -
the only known cover with Official stamps to Santo Domingo!
During the Spanish rule between 1861 and 1865, Official stamps of Spain were used on Official mail, but very few covers are known; only about a handful have been recorded. The use of Official stamps printed in Cuba has until recently been unknown, but obviously supplies of Official stamps were shipped from Cuba to Santo Domingo.

1862 (6 December) Una Onza Havana printing + Media Onza Madrid printing from Santo Domingo to Puerto Rico

Havana printing 1 ounce + Madrid printing \( \frac{1}{2} \) ounce from Santo Domingo to Puerto Rico.

Very Rare -
cover restored but the only recorded example of Havana printings used in Santo Domingo!
PHILIPPINES

The Philippines consists of 7,100 islands and lies in Southeast Asia in the western Pacific Ocean. Across the seas to its north lies Taiwan, to the west Vietnam, and to the south Indonesia. The arrival of Ferdinand Magellan in 1521 marked the beginning of an era of Spanish interest and eventual dominance which lasted until 1898 and the Spanish-American War, after which the United States replaced Spain as the dominant power.

1866 Una Onza from Manila

Lounge from Manila
1859 (3 November) Una Onza from Madrid to Manila

1 ounce from Spain to Manila
PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico is an island located in the northeastern Caribbean Sea, east of the Dominican Republic and west of the Virgin Islands. Columbus arrived in Puerto Rico during his second voyage in 1493 and named the island San Juan Bautista. Eventually, visitors came to refer to the entire island as “Puerto Rico”, and “San Juan” became the name of the main port. In July 1898, during the Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico was invaded by the United States.

1867 (1 March) Media Onza from San Juan

½ ounce from San Juan

1859 (30 December) Media Onza from San Juan to Mallorca

½ ounce from Puerto Rico to Mallorca
PUERTO RICO - OFFICIAL AND REGULAR STAMPS

Although the Official stamps were taken out of service as of the 1 August 1866, they continued to be used by some Government Departments. When this happened, the addressee had to pay the postage with regular stamps.

1866 (7 December) Media Onza + 1864 ½ Real Plata on white paper from San Juan

1867 (1 March) Media Onza + 1864 ½ Real Plata on rose paper from San Juan
1865 (17 May) Una Onza from Cabo Rojo - Poverty mail “De parte pobre”

1866 (16 April) Una Onza from San Juan, taxed “I” rate with 1864 ½ Real Plata as postage due
PUERTO RICO

1865 (25 January) Cuatro Onzas from Mayaguez

4 ounces from Mayaguez

1862 (26 May) Cuatro Onzas (x2) from San Juan

8 ounces from San Juan
1864 (8 August) Media Onza (x6) + Cuatro Onzas from Mayaguez

7 ounces from Mayaguez
1866 (27 July) Cuatro Onzas (x3) from San German

12 ounces from San German
SPAIN - OFFICIAL STAMPS

PUERTO RICO

1862 (20 February) Cuatro Onzas + Una Libra from San Juan

20 ounces from San Juan.

Very rare - only three covers known with 1 Pound used in Puerto Rico!
SPAIN - OFFICIAL STAMPS

PUERTO RICO - MAIL FROM SPAIN

1860 (18 July) Media Onza + Una Onza (x2) from Barcelona to Puerto Rico

2½ ounce from Spain to Puerto Rico

1857 (30 March) Una Onza (x3) from Barcelona to Puerto Rico

Early use 3 ounces from Spain to Puerto Rico