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Today's Collector
New Opportunities

What is NF IIIb Dos Reales Olive Color?



Plate 3 Olive (Scan about 1 step to dark)

The scanners almost always make these stamps too dark

Recently, I was confronted with the task of describing the 'Olive' tinted 1856 Plate Three Dos Reales issues. Nick has the listing in his catalog under Dos Reales IIIb valued at \$30 unused and \$4 used. The value difference is minimal compared to the standard Yellow Green. This is likely because it fits within the Green Dos Reales issues of 1856. This was my first attempt to tell my friend what to look for.

"Now to the 'Olive Green' Plate: Three examples. I bet you have heard the term 'Sap Green'. Well, there are no real 'Sap Greens' in the Plate I issues. Nor is there any 'Apple Greens' in Plate Three. "Olive" is a term I coined to describe the color observed on some Plate 3 stamps. It is more of a Dull Green, darker than most Middle spectrum, balanced between Yellow and Blue. The color still has enough yellow to avoid the blue-sided tint. It does not occur often, but when it does, it may appear lighter than Army Green and resemble the color of a Green Olive found in grocery store bottles. Now, the huge problem is that if you were trying to describe every tint of green in the hundreds of thousands, maybe millions, of Green Plate 3 Dos Reales, you would become colorblind. If I have a chance to go through a couple of hundred Plate Thees and find something you could use for the color, I will let you know."

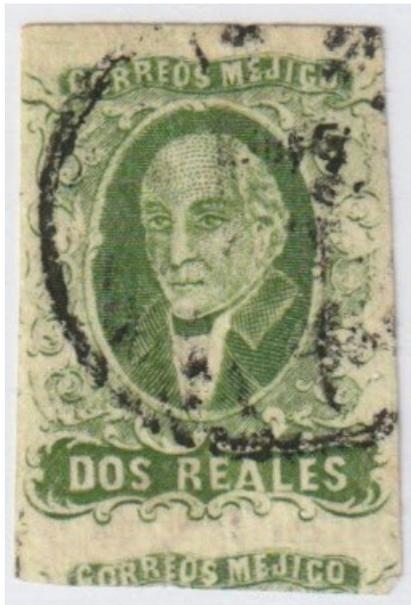


Plate 3 Olive (scan about two steps too dark)

I cautioned my friend that distinguishing the tints is difficult because the ink was mixed differently in the early 1856 issues. The printer mixed a new batch of color each time it ran out during printing or when starting a new day. Consisting of minor changes that also changed the colors. Even under printing pressure, paper moisture affected how we perceive color.

A few days later, I wrote my friend to report on my findings.

"I described what Nick meant by 'Olive Green'. Yes, it exists, but most collectors don't know what it really looks like. After I sent the past message, I started reviewing one of my albums containing stock sheets for Dos Reales Greens. I must have reviewed about 10 of these stock sheets, each holding roughly 60 stamps. These stamps were left over and duplicated. Mostly from the District, including Mexico, GDA, and other large populations, with high stamp usage. One of the first stock sheets, a good example, appeared early and provided a useful guide. The color is deeper than most greens, with a little more yellow, but the clarity of the print suggests it was likely one of the first of the plate three's to be printed. Keep in mind the sheets were filled with rejected stamps, but some came from sheets I had never spent much time working on. Before I finished, I had four good examples of the color I was looking for. To me, it is similar to why we call the Plate One Olive, because it has a yellowish tint to the standard Emerald, and these Plate Three issues in Olive have a little yellowish tint to what we think of as a perfect mix of yellow and blue, a standard green with darker hues."



Plate 3 almost Olive

The background to this one is closer to a basic Green (both yellow and blue mix)

Yesterday, I had some time and worked on the other stamps in the Red boxes. Thumbing through these, I came upon a couple of lighter examples I had marked "Olive," but when compared to the darker examples, one thing stood out: the color was just a good yellow-green. My new journey is not over, but I thought you might be interested in how a brief search can lead to a great study.

Enjoy!

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