

# The Ernest Meyer's imprints on the *large Hermes heads of Greece and on the Cérés of France*

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## I) Introduction

The primary and main intent of this study is to give the exact status of the known stamps, as of today, of the large Hermes head of Greece and the “*Cérés 1858*” & “*Cérés without inscription*” of France, bearing the inscription of the printer, Ernest Meyer<sup>1</sup>. A classification of all these stamps is also proposed in order to recognise them more easily in the future<sup>2</sup>.

The only in-depth work done, so far, on this subject is the outstanding study published in 1969 by George M. Photiadis<sup>3</sup>. Since then, only our well-known friend, Michael Tseriotis, has published an updated inventory of the large Hermes head stamps with the Ernest Meyer's imprint. It appeared in one of the seven auction catalogues<sup>4</sup> of the sale of George Zachariades' collection, in the years 2002/2006 by David Feldman of Geneva.

These singles, strips or blocks of stamps with the printer's imprint, and in particular the complete set of strips of imprimaturs of the 7 values (see paragraph 3, below), have been the heart of the most prestigious collections of Greek classical philately: Dorning Beckton, Nicolaïdès, Alfieris, Ferrari, Argyropoulos, Garas, Burrus, Maximus, Zachariades, and are considered by all advanced specialists, since about a century now, as the gems of large Hermes head collections:

- “*It's probably the greatest rarity existing and the most lovely set of the Greek stamps.*”: Luder-Edelmann & CO., 1929<sup>5</sup>.
- “*The choicest items in all Greek Philately.*”: Ernest Spink – Robert Truman, 1949.
- “*...the desirability of these lovely classics is beyond question, and all connoisseurs of Greek stamps appreciate their beauty and attraction.*”: Robson Lowe Ltd., 1962.
- “*...the most important and valuable rarity of Greek philately.*”: David Feldman, 1984.
- “*This fantastic assembly was the crown jewel of unused Greece in the Ferrari, Burrus and Maximus collections, its rarity and importance is almost unsurpassable*”: Marcus Orsi & Michael Tseriotis, 2002.

So as we have just read above these stamps are remarkable by their beauty and the fineness of their printing as they come from the “*bonnes feuilles*”, the first sheets printed when the press started to roll<sup>6</sup>. They are known as the *imprimaturs*<sup>7</sup> of the large Hermes head or, as Photiadis called them in his study: the “*specimen d'impression*”, being exactly the same as the Paris printings but not gummed (some of them have now false gum...) and coming from the first sheets of the printing.

## II) History of the *large Hermes head imprimaturs* & essays with Ernest Meyer's imprint

The Ernest Meyer's imprint was first mentioned<sup>8</sup> in the philatelic literature in Walter Dorning Beckton's study of 1897, which included a picture of a strip of three of the 20 lepta (see figure 1, below). In this study, the author wrongly stated that the large Hermes head die was engraved by Jacques-Jean Barre, and that the

<sup>1</sup> We do not know a lot about the printer Ernest Meyer, except that he was installed in Paris and was printing gravures (see figure 10, below) and books in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The philatelic literature (Arthur E. Glasewald, in 1896, and the *Kohl Briefmarken handbuch* by Dr. H. Munk & A. Argyropoulos, in 1929) is stating that it was German and was established in Dresden in 1870 where he died in 1895. I have put on Wikipedia all the information compiled about him known to date ([http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest\\_Meyer](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Meyer)).

<sup>2</sup> The numbers used on this classification of all the known items, with the partial or complete printer's imprint, are starting by “EM” and are appearing under brackets in the legend of all the illustrations of this study. They are described in detail in the paragraphs III & IV and charts 1 & 2, below.

<sup>3</sup> George M. Photiadis, *The imprint “Typographie Ernest Meyer, Rue de Verneuil 22, à Paris.” on the Sheets of the Large Hermes Heads of Greece Printed in Paris (1861)*, The Royal Philatelic Society, London, 1969.

<sup>4</sup> David Feldman auction catalogue, *The Collection (II) Greece – The Large Hermes Heads*, p. 10, Genève, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002 (Lot N° 10,016).

<sup>5</sup> “*C'est probablement la plus grande rareté existante et la plus belle série de timbres grecs.*”: Luder-Edelmann auction catalogue, *Grèce - Collection spécialisée de Monsieur le Marquis Ferrari de la Renotière*, Zurich, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1929 (Lot N° 5,050).

<sup>6</sup> Pierre Mahé, “*Souvenirs d'un Timbrophile – Les Timbres Grecs*”, *L'Echo de la Timbrologie* no. 369/1908, p. 302.

<sup>7</sup> Louis Fanchini, “*Definitions of the terms PROOF and ESSAY and their application to the large Hermes head stamps*”, *Philotelia* no. 644/2007.

<sup>8</sup> In 1896, Arthur E. Glasewald, in his study, *Die Postwerthzeichen von Griechenland*, is speaking about a German printer, who died in Dresden, as being the printer of the Paris issues of the large Hermes head, but without mentioning his name...

printing plates were manufactured by Ernest Meyer, when in fact the engraver of the die and the manufacturer of the printing plates was Désiré-Albert Barre<sup>9</sup>.

Starting with the publication of this study, in 1897, and the discovery of this strip of three 20 lepta, a big debate has divided the community of lovers of this marvellous stamp: who was the printer of the large Hermes head stamps in Paris, Anatole-Auguste Hulot<sup>10</sup> or Ernest Meyer?



Figure 1: The strip of three of the 20 lepta (EM5c), the first picture of an imprimatur with the printer's inscription to appear in the philatelic literature, in 1897

In 1906, Pierre Mahé, a famous Parisian stamp dealer and bookseller, related, in an article, *Reminiscences of a Veteran*<sup>11</sup>, the unique experience he had around the year 1868, when he bought from an unknown couple a set of complete sheets of 150 stamps of the seven values of the Paris printing large Hermes head, all un-gummed and all bearing the Ernest Meyer's inscription, for the modest amount of 180 francs, plus a book. On the 1 lepton, 2, 5, 20, 40 & 80 lepta sheets the inscription was on the right-bottom part of the sheet, whereas for the 10 lepta it was on the left-bottom part of the sheet. These imprints are printed with the same colour as the stamps of the sheet. Mahé, as one of the main suppliers to the Marquis Ferrari de la Renotière, the most famous collector ever, sold to him the strips of 4 stamps of six values, bearing the printer's inscription, but without the 40 lepta (see figure 3 & paragraph III, below). He sold in the philatelic market the other parts of the seven sheets as blocks and singles until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Pierre Mahé spoke also about a second lucky find of large Hermes head sheets with the printer's inscription, but without stating its exact date or describing the content in any detail... In his study<sup>12</sup>, Photiadis expressed his serious doubts about the veracity of the two Mahé lucky finds, considered them to be Fairy Tales, and thought that the two finds came from a single one... Perhaps, one day, we shall know the true story of these Mahé find(s)?

In 1923, Nicolas S. Nicolaïdés<sup>13</sup> wrote about two sheets with the printer's inscription (1 lepton & 20 lepta) discovered, among many other essays of Greece and other countries, at the printing office of the French Mint in Paris after the death of Anatole-Auguste Hulot in 1892. The famous Alfieris bloc of twenty-five of the 20 lepta (figure 2, below) could probably come (?) from the 20 lepta complete sheet discovered here. This bloc is gummed and the authenticity of the gum has been the subject of a big debate for many decades<sup>14</sup>...

Finally, in 1929, the famous Greek collector Nicolas Garas bought from Barre's family heirs<sup>15</sup> a set of seven complete sheets of 150 stamps of the 2, 5, 10 (one sheet with "Control Numbers", and one without), 20, 40 & 80 lepta<sup>16</sup>. Only the two sheets of the 10 lepta bore the complete printer's inscription. Four other sheets (2, 5,

<sup>9</sup> Louis Fanchini: "The essays "Cérès 1858": Why are they an integral part of Greek philately?", *Philotelia* nos. 652-653/2008 & 654/2009.

<sup>10</sup> Anatole-Auguste Hulot (1811 - 1892) was in charge of the printing of the stamps of France and its Colonies from 1848 to 1876 at the French Mint in Paris. He was also initially supposed to print the Greek stamps of the large Hermes head, but it's never happened.

<sup>11</sup> Pierre Mahé, "Reminiscences of a veteran – The Stamps of Greece", *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*, vol. no. XVII of November 30<sup>th</sup> 1906, pp. 100-102, and March 30<sup>th</sup> 1907, pp. 194-195.

<sup>12</sup> George M. Photiades, *The imprint "Typographie Ernest Meyer..."*

<sup>13</sup> Nicolas S. Nicolaïdés, *Histoire de la création du timbre grec*, Paris, 1923, pp. 18-20. In this book, Nicolaïdés wrongly stated that Anatole-Auguste Hulot was the printer of the large Hermes heads in Paris. He also wrote that the famous block of 11 imprimaturs of the 10 lepta with, on the back, the hand written "Hommage affectueux de l'auteur" and signed Albert Barre, was a gift of the engraver to Anatole-Auguste Hulot which is absolutely improbable knowing the relation, during about 30 years, between the two main important personages of the stamps manufacturing, in France, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century... The statement saying that Hulot was the initiator of the "Control Numbers" on the back of the large Hermes head stamps is also highly questionable... Nicolaïdés also wrote that one or two sheets of the 20 lepta with the printer's inscription have been sent by Ernest Meyer to Athens and then dispatched among the employees, but, again, without any further explanation or reference...

<sup>14</sup> Michael Tseriotis, "The Alfieris block of 25 Paris print 20 lepta with printer's inscription", *Philotelia* no. 672/2012, pp. 12-13.

<sup>15</sup> Nicolas Garas, "Une trouvaille unique", *Philotelia* no. 54/1929, pp. 149-151.

<sup>16</sup> Four of these sheets (2 lepta, 5 lepta, 10 lepta with "Control Numbers" & 20 lepta) have been carefully photographed and are part of the Luder-Edelmann catalogue of the auction no. XIII of November 4<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup>, 1929 in Zurich. In this catalogue (pp. 47-52), Nicolaïdés is quoted by the authors: Désiré-Albert Barre kept 2 complete sets of 7 sheets with the printer's imprint. The first one stayed in his own collection (the sheets bought by Nicolas Garas and part of this sale), and

20 & 80 lepta) had traces of the horizontal line above the printer's inscription after the bottom part of the sheets had been cut with scissors. Three of these sheets (5, 20 & 80 lepta) are part of the Andreadis' *Kassandra* collection and can be seen in the Edition d'Or book<sup>17</sup>. This is another big debate among the community of the large Hermes head specialists since ages: Were the 8,962<sup>18</sup> complete sheets sent to Athens in August & September 1861 printed with the Ernest Meyer's imprint, and then cut at the bottom before their sending to Athens or were they printed without any printer's inscription after the removal of the imprint line from the typographic plate before the printing of the of the issued stamps...? As not any single official document on the relation between Désiré-Albert Barre and Ernest Meyer has been discovered, so far, and after the find of these 4 sheets with traces of the printer's imprint we can only suppose that one of these two hypothesis is the right one...<sup>19</sup>



Figure 2: The famous Alfieris block of twenty-five of the 20 lepta with the printer's inscription (EM5d)

Anyway, all these discoveries proved that Ernest Meyer played a key role in the large Hermes head printing in Paris. Then in 1937, Docteur Pierre Bouvet almost closed the question of who was the printer of the Paris printing of the large Hermes head by publishing a study<sup>20</sup> after his discovery of the documents of the order of the Greek first stamps in the French Mint archives in Paris. Anatole-Auguste Hulot was neither the manufacturer of the typographic plates nor the printer of the first Greek stamps but it was Désiré-Albert who produced the plates and conducted the printing of the stamps outside of the French Mint.

Finally, the daybooks of Désiré-Albert Barre became public in 2002, after more than 140 years, when the engraver's heirs sold the last family archives during the Aguttes auction in Neuilly/France. The "*Musée de La Poste*" in Paris bought these precious books. With the exposure of these official documents, I have been able to reorder the set of events between all the participants of the first Greek stamps creation, from the Greek Government order, to the manufacture of the plates and the print of the stamps, by the French administration in Paris. This story was put in writing<sup>21</sup>, confirming that Anatole-Auguste Hulot was definitively not the printer of the large Hermes heads Paris issues but that it should only be Ernest Meyer who printed our favourite classic stamps under the direction and supervision of Désiré-Albert Barre.

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the second one was dispatched and distributed among the engraver's friends. The first set was initially supposed to be given to the Greek embassy in Paris... But, as so many other Nicolaïdès statements, no source, no reference nor any official document is mentioned, so how could we trust all these stories?

<sup>17</sup> Stavros Andreadis, *Greece – Large Hermes heads 1861/86, Kassandra' Collection*, Edition d'Or XXVIII, Wiesbaden, 2011, pp. 21, 23 & 25.

<sup>18</sup> Louis Fanchini, "Tirages de Paris de la « grosse tête d'Hermès » : Quantités exactes commandées et livrées à Athènes", *Documents Philatéliques* no. 211/2011.

<sup>19</sup> In my opinion, the two complete sets of imprimaturs/"specimen d'impression", printed with the printer's imprint, have been used as the "ready to press" by Barre before starting the massive printing of the about 9,000 sheets of the issued stamps. When receiving them, Désiré-Albert Barre asked Ernest Meyer to remove the imprint line, with the name and address of the printer, from the typographic plate before commencing the production printing.

<sup>20</sup> Docteur Pierre Bouvet, *La commande à la Monnaie de Paris des timbres grecs à tête de Mercure, (17 Juillet, 1860 – 26 Septembre 1861)*, Académie de Philatélie, Paris, 1937.

<sup>21</sup> Louis Fanchini: "The essays "Cérès 1858": Why are they an integral part..." *op. cit.*

### III) The legendary complete set of the seven values of the imprimaturs with the Ernest Meyer's imprint

As part of all the large Hermes heads bearing the printer's inscription, and since about a century now, a complete set of strips of the seven values is considered as a legendary set by the philatelic community and has been in the hands of only five prestigious collections.

As written above, the famous collector Ferrari was the first one to own the "almost complete set" of the seven values of the Paris printing large Hermes head. The only value missing was the 40 lepta, which had not been provided by Mahé, who probably sold it prior to his transaction with Ferrari. A strip of four of the 40 lepta of the left bottom corner of the sheet, but without the printer's inscription, was provided in its place. The Greek part of the Ferrari's collection was sold in 1929<sup>22</sup>.

This "almost complete set" reappeared in 1962<sup>23</sup> during the sale of the collection of Maurice Burrus, who was considered the most famous collector of the world, for decades, after the death of Ferrari.

The complete set, with that time, a strip of three of the 40 lepta with the printer's inscription was part of the Maximus collection sale in 1984<sup>24</sup>.

Finally, the last time the complete set appeared on the market was during the sale of the Zachariades' collection<sup>25</sup>, and belongs now to a new happy collector.



**Figure 3:** The complete legendary set of the Large Hermes head imprimaturs strips of the seven values, with the printer's inscription (EM1, EM2, EM3, EM4, EM5, EM6 & EM7)

<sup>22</sup> Luder-Edelmann, *Grèce - Collection spécialisée de Monsieur le Marquis Ferrari de la Renotière*, auction on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1929 in Zurich, (Lot N° 5,050). The "almost complete set" was hammered at 17,500 francs, the highest price of this auction.

<sup>23</sup> Robson Lowe Ltd., *The Burrus Collection – Greece and Egypt*, auction on Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>, 1962 in London (Lots N° 1,222, 1,226, 1,229, 1,233, 1,240, 1,244 & 1,248).

<sup>24</sup> David Feldman, *The Maximus Collection (Part II)*, auction on March 1984 in Geneva (Lot N° 10,019). The complete set was hammered at 19,500 Swiss francs.

<sup>25</sup> David Feldman, *The Collection (II)*, auction on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2002, in Geneva (Lot N° 10,016). The complete set was hammered at 240,000 Swiss francs, the highest price lot of this auction.

On the following chart, I have listed the strips of the legendary complete set of the imprimaturs with the printer's inscription of the large Hermes head, plus the strip of four of the 40 lepta, without inscription, which was used in the Ferrari and Burrus collections to complete the legendary set. In this chart, are also mentioned:

- the auctions, as well as articles and studies, that show illustrations of these 8 imprimaturs,
- the imprint type (see paragraph V, below) and
- the classification numbers of the Constantinides' etude as well as the ones I am using in this study.

LF N°	Type/ Value	Description	Imprint type	HPS Etude N°	Appeared in auctions, books or articles
EM1	LHH 1 lepton	Strip of 4 imprimaturs	1	1 ES. V.	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/Nov. 1962 (Lot N° 1,222) - DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,016) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 9/Fig. 1) - 1985 Andronicus' article, <i>HPS of GB Bulletin</i> N° 16/57 (p. 3)
EM2	LHH 2 lepta	Strip of 4 imprimaturs	2	2 ES. IV.	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/Nov. 1962 (Lot N° 1,226) - DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,016) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 9/Fig. 2)
EM3	LHH 5 lepta	Strip of 4 imprimaturs	2	3 ES. IV.	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/Nov. 1962 (Lot N° 1,229) - DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,016) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 9/Fig. 3)
EM4	LHH 10 lepta with "Control Numbers"	Strip of 4 imprimaturs	3	4 ES. II.	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/Nov. 1962 (Lot N° 1,233) - DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,016) - 1933 Constantinidès' étude - Planche XV (p. 93) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 9/Fig. 4) - 1985 Andronicus' article, <i>HPS of GB Bulletin</i> N° 16/57 (p. 4)
EM5	LHH 20 lepta	Strip of 4 imprimaturs	2	5 ES. IV.	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/Nov. 1962 (Lot N° 1,240) - DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,016) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 11/Fig. 5)
EM6	LHH 40 lepta	Strip of 3 imprimaturs	2	6 ES. V.	- DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II (Lot N° 10,016) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 17/Fig. 8)
EM7	LHH 80 lepta	Strip of 4 imprimaturs	2	7 ES. II.	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/November 1962 (Lot 1,248) - DF/Maximus Collection (Part II)/March 1984 (Lot N° 10,019) - DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,016) - 1933 Constantinidès' étude - Planche XV (p. 93) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 11/Fig. 7)
-	LHH 40 lepta	Strip of 4 imprimaturs without imprint (*)	-	6 ES. IV. 2	- Luder-Edelmann/Ferrari Collection/April 1929 (Lot N° 5,050) - Robson Lowe/Burrus Collection/November 1962 (Lot N° 1,244) - DF/March 1986 (Lot N° 10,022) - DF/The Collection III/May 2004 (Lot N° 10,010) - 1933 Constantinidès' étude - Planche XV (p. 93) - 1969 Photiadis' study, <i>The London Philatelist</i> (p. 11/Fig. 6)

(\*): Part of the "almost complete set" of the Ferrari de la Renotière and Burrus collections.

- In this chart, DF means David Feldman. Regarding the imprint types, see paragraph V, below.

**Chart 1:** Imprimaturs with the printer's inscription, parts of the legendary complete set

#### IV) Classification and numbering of all the items with partial or complete printer's imprints

As described in Photiatis' study there are 2 classes of different items with the printer's imprint:

## 1) The imprimaturs or “specimen d’impression”

The nine items shown above (Figures: 1, 2 & 3) are imprimaturs being issued from first sheets printed when the press starts to print. Below are presented all the other known imprimaturs with the printer’s imprint:



Figure 4: The two blocks of forty of the 10 lepta, with “Control Numbers” (EM 4a), and without “Control Number” (EM4A), Constantin Mattheos’ collection



Figure 5: The strip of five of the 5 Lepta (EM3a) - Stavros Andreadis’ collection



Figure 6: The first of the three blocks of eight of the 1 lepton (EM1a)

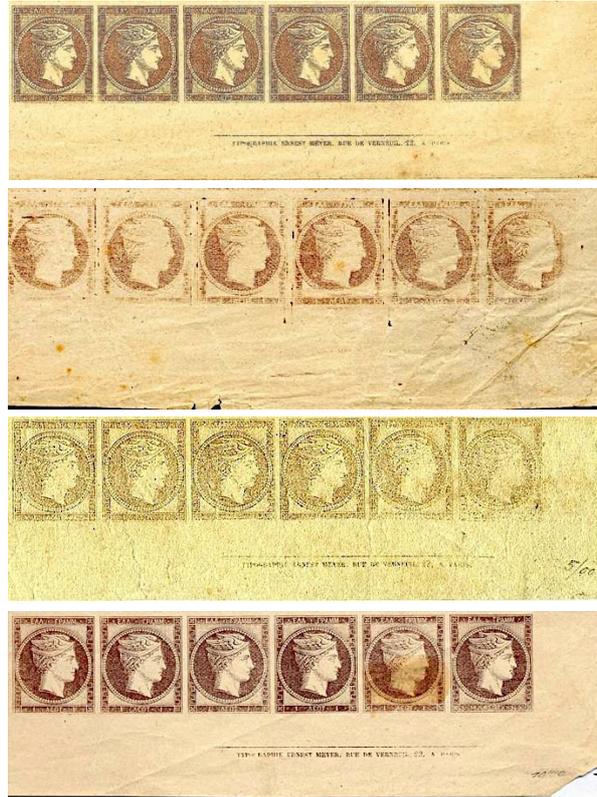
## 2) The essays

Several other known items come from sheets used as essays<sup>26</sup> during the calibration of the printing press. They are generally of coarse quality of printing, and sometime printed recto/verso.



Figure 7: The second of the three blocks of eight of the 1 lepton (EM1b)

<sup>26</sup> Louis Fanchini, “Definitions of the terms PROOF and ESSAY...” *op. cit.*



**Figure 8:** The four strips of six of the 1 lepton, all coming from existing complete sheets of 150 essays (EM1d, EM1e, EM1f & EM1g) Stavros Andreadis' collection for the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>, and Constantin Mattheos' collection for the 3<sup>rd</sup>

The two known single essays, printed recto/verso (figure 9, below) probably come from the same sheet, in which case, there should exist a third essay, in between these two, bearing the missing partial printer's imprint ("...RNEST MEYER, RUE DE V..."), but I have not found it in any auction catalogue, article or study...



**Figure 9:** The two single essays of the 20 lepta, printed recto/verso, with partial printer's inscription (EM4a & EM4b)

### 3) The "Cérès 1858" and the "Cérès without inscription" essays with Ernest Meyer's imprint

In 1858/1859, Désiré-Albert Barre developed for the French postal administration a new method to manufacture typographic plates for printing the stamps: the "direct striking in the coining press" method. When in 1861, the French and Greek administrations asked him to print the first Greek stamp, he used that new method to produce the printing plates. He validated then the usage and the printing of the "Control Numbers" on the back of the stamps with one of the "Cérès 1858" essays, the blue on blue paper one (figure 13, below). He also continued to prototype his new method by creating a plate made by pure steel and printed the "Cérès without inscription" essays to validate it (figure 14, below). Barre subcontracted to Ernest Meyer the printing of these two essays. A unique block of the first essay and a unique complete sheet of 100 essays of the second one, in red<sup>27</sup>, are known today, with the printer's imprints<sup>28</sup>.

### 4) The proposed classification of all the known items with partial or complete printer's imprints

Presented below is a chart showing, in addition to the 7 values of the legendary set (see paragraph III, above), all the items bearing a partial or a complete printer's imprint, that I have been able to identify, so far, in the philatelic literature and in auctions catalogues, together with a proposed classification:

<sup>27</sup> The "Cérès without inscription" exists in two colours, red & blue (2 shades). To my knowledge, the blue one with the printer's inscription has never been seen.

<sup>28</sup> Louis Fanchini: "The essays "Cérès 1858": Why are they an integral part..." *op. cit.*

LF N°	Type/ Value	Description	Imprint type	Total items	Figure N° in this study	HPS Etude N°	Appeared in auctions, books or articles
EM1a (*)	LHH 1 lepton	Block of 8 imprimaturs	1	7	6	1 ES. V.	- Corinthila N° 36/May-June 1949 (Lot N° 33) - Stanley Gibbons/Greece & Portugal/March 1972 (Lot N° 112) - Rapp/November 1983 (Lot N° 2,505) - DF/The Collection VII/June 2006 (Lot N° 10,005) - 1924 Nicolaidēs' book (p. 18)
EM1b		Block of 8 imprimaturs			7		- Corinthila N° 39/October 1951 (Lot N° 1,891) - Rapp/November 1983 (Lot N° 2,504) - DF/The Collection VII/June 2006 (Lot N° 10,007) - 1941 Truman's study, The stamp specialist (p. 75) - 1944 Truman's translation of Kohl's handbuch/IV (p. 175) - 1949 Spink/Truman's study, Billig's catalogue (p. 7)
EM1c (*)		Block of 8 essays			11		- DF/Maximus Collection (Part V)/Nov. 1985 (Lot N° 10,167) - DF/The Collection VII/June 2006 (Lot N° 10,006)
EM1d		Complete sheet of 150 essays			8a		- DF/The Collection VII/June 2006 (Lot N° 10,004) - DF/Greece/April 2012 (Lot N° 30,001)
EM1e		Complete sheet of 150 essays			8b		- Karamitsos N° 176/February 2004 (Lot N° 1)
EM1f (*)		Complete sheet of 150 essays			8c		- DF/Europe/November 1989 (Lot N° 43,918) - 2011 Mattheos' book (p. 16/17)
EM1g (*)		Complete sheet of 150 essays			8d		- Part of Stavros Andreadis' collection
EM3a	LHH 5 lepta	Strip of 5 imprimaturs	2	1	5	3 ES. IV.	- DF/Maximus Collection (Part I)/October 1983 (Lot N° 31,026) - DF/The Collection I/February 2002 (Lot N° 10,027) - DF/The Collection VII/June 2006 (Lot N° 10,016)
EM4a	LHH 10 lepta with "Control Numbers"	Block of 40 imprimaturs	3	1	4a	4 ES. II.	- Luder-Edelmann N° XIII/Nov. 1929 (Complete sheet picture) - Phillips/Alphonse Collection/November 1992 (Lot N° 544) - Karamitsos N° 117/July 2000 (Lot N° 11) - 2005 Asimakopulos' book (p. 64)
EM4A	LHH 10 lepta w/o "Control Number"	Block of 40 imprimaturs	3	1	4b	4 ES. I.3	- Phillips/Alphonse Collection /November 1992 (Lot N° 545) - DF/The Grand Prix Collection I/May 2003 (Lot N° 30,025) - 1995 Mattheos' article, The Collectors Club N° 74/6 (p. 349) - 2011 Mattheos' book (p. 19)
EM5a	LHH 20 lepta	Single essay with partial imprint on the back: "TYPOGRAPHIE E"	3 (?)	4	9a	5 II. 8. (?)	- DF/The Collection II/December 2002 (Lot N° 10,009)
EM5b (*)/(**)		Single essay with partial imprint on the back: "ERNEUIL 22, A PARIS."	3		9b		- Karamitsos N° 362/June 2010 (Lot N° 7)
EM5c		Strip of 3 imprimaturs	2		1	5 ES. IV.	- Harmer/Dorning Beckton Collection/Nov. 1935 (Lot N° 63) - Robson Lowe/Adams Collection/April 1956 (Lot N° 32) - Stanley Gibbons/Greece & Portugal/March 1972 (Lot N° 141) - DF/Hellas Collection/June 1992 (Lot N° 10,051) - DF/Turkey, ME & Balkans/February 1999 (Lot N° 20,899) - 1897 Dorning Beckton's study (p. 125) - 1969 Photiadis' study, The London Philatelist (p. 17/fig. 9) - 1995 Asimakopulos' book (p. 62)
EM5d		Block of 25 imprimaturs	2		2		- Harmer/November 1954 (Lot N° 62) - Vlastos N° 124/December 1983 (Lot N° 38) - Karamitsos N° 150/September 2002 (Lot N° 30) - Investphila/November 2010 (Lot N° 453) - Spink Private Treaty Sale/October 2012 (p. 2) - 1933 Constantinidēs' étude - Planche XVI/fig. 2 (p. 95) - 1969 Photiadis' study, The London Philatelist (p. 17/fig. 10) - 2012 Hellas catalogue of Karamitsos (p.7) - 2012 Tseriotis' article - Philotelia N° 672 (p. 12) - 2012 Spink Insider/Autumn 2012 (p. 23)
EM7a1		Block of 8 imprimaturs (severed – 2 X 4) Left part	2		2		12
EM7a2 (*)	Block of 8 imprimaturs (severed – 2 X 4) Right part	12		- DF/November 1994 (Lot N° 31,199) - Karamitsos N° 183/May 2004 (Lot N° 35) - Karamitsos N° 259/June 2007 (Lot N° 82) - 1995 Mattheos' article, The Collectors Club N° 74/6 (p. 349) - 2007 Fanchini's article, Philotelia N° 644 (p. 144) - 2008/09 Fanchini's study, Philotelia N° 652/654 (p.372/373)			
EM8 (*)	"Cérés 1858"	Block of 8 of the blue on blue paper essay with "Control Numbers"	3	1	13	-	- Rapp/November 1983 (Lot N° 2,500) - DF/The Collection VII/June 2006 (Lot N° 10,001) - 2008/09 Fanchini's study, Philotelia N° 652/654 (p.372/373)
EM9 (*)/(**)	"Cérés w/o inscription"	Complete sheet of 100 essays	4	1	14	-	- Aguttes/December 2002 (Lot N° 7) - 2008/09 Fanchini's study, Philotelia N° 652/654 (p.12)
- (*)	LHH 1 lepton	Complete sheet of 150	-	-	-	-	Mentioned by Tseriotis but no trace has been found in any auction catalogue, book or article...
- (**)	LHH 20 lepta	Complete sheet of 150	-	-	-	-	Mentioned by Photiadis but no trace has been found in any auction catalogue, book or article...

(\*): Not listed in the 1969 Photiadis' study - (\*\*): Not listed in the 2002 Tseriotis' index

**Chart 2:** Imprimaturs and Essays - with partial or complete printer's inscription, in addition to the legendary complete set

## 5) Total identified items with the partial or complete printer's imprints, as of today

So the total number of items bearing the partial or complete printer's imprints I have been able to identify is 25 (23 on the large Hermes head, 1 on the "Cérès 1858" and 1 on the "Cérès sans inscription").

In 1969, Photiadis had referenced only 18 large Hermes head items, including one complete sheet of the 20 lepta which, to my knowledge, has never been seen in any auction, book or article nor is it included in the 2002 index of Tseriotis. As mentioned by Tseriotis, the Alfieris bloc (figure 2) could have come from that sheet if it has existed... (?)

In 2002, Tseriotis counted 23 large Hermes head items, plus the "Cérès 1858" blue on blue paper one, including one complete sheet of the 1 lepton that I have not been able to find during all my researches in the books/articles or auctions catalogues and which is neither in any collection of all the advanced collectors that I have questioned...

The chart below shows the number of item(s) for each type & value and the differences versus the 1969 Photiadis' study and the 2002 Tseriotis' index:

Description	Complete Legendary Set	Other Items	Total	Comments versus Louis Fanchini's classification
LHH – 1 lepton	1	7	8	Only 4 are referenced by Photiadis, and 9 are referenced by Tseriotis (1 additional complete sheet)
LHH – 2 lepta	1	-	1	Referenced by both Photiadis & Tseriotis
LHH – 5 lepta	1	1	2	The 2 are referenced by both Photiadis & Tseriotis
LHH – 10 lepta with CN	1	1	2	The 2 are referenced by both Photiadis & Tseriotis
LHH – 10 lepta without CN	-	1	1	Referenced by both Photiadis & Tseriotis
LHH – 20 lepta	1	4	5	5 are referenced by Photiadis (with 1 additional complete sheet but w/o one of the two single essays) and, 4 are referenced by Tseriotis (w/o one of the two single essays)
LHH – 40 lepta	1	-	1	Referenced by both Photiadis & Tseriotis
LHH – 80 lepta	1	2	3	The 3 are referenced by Tseriotis and only 2 by Photiadis
"Cérès 1858"	-	1	1	Referenced by Tseriotis and not referenced by Photiadis
"Cérès without inscription"	-	1	1	Not referenced by both Photiadis & Tseriotis
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>	

**Chart 3:** Total number of the Imprimaturs and Essays with partial or complete Ernest Meyer's inscription

## V) The four different imprints types of the Ernest Meyer's inscription

Many different variations exist on the side & position of the typographic block capitals and on the punctuation of the printer's inscription as described by Photiadis<sup>29</sup>. However, four main different types of inscriptions of the printer Ernest Meyer can be observed more evidently on the known items: the same inscription, "TYPOGRAPHIE ERNEST MEYER, RUE DE VERNEUIL, 22, A PARIS", is written using different punctuation and/or using different typography.

This same inscription also exists on gravures (figure 10, below) and on books printed by Ernest Meyer in France, in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>30</sup>.



**Figure 10:** Gravure "Les Poissons de Table - Les Pêcheurs de Marée" with Ernest Meyer's imprint, (real size: 272 X 380 mm), 1850

<sup>29</sup> George M. Photiadis, *The imprint "Typographie Ernest Meyer..."* (pp. 21-23 – Note no. 28).

<sup>30</sup> See the Wikipedia web site on "Ernest Meyer" ([http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest\\_Meyer](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Meyer)).

### 1) Type 1 imprint

On the imprimaturs and essays of the 1 lepton of the *large Hermes head*, the printer's inscription is written using only points as punctuation, but without a point at the end of the inscription:



**TYPOGRAPHIE ERNEST MEYER, RUE DE VERNEUIL, 22, A PARIS.**

Figure 11: The third of the three blocks of eight of the 1 lepton imprimatur (EM1c) with the magnified printer's inscription (Type 1)

### 2) Type 2 imprint

On the imprimaturs of the 2, 5, 20, 40 & 80 Lepta of the *large Hermes head*, the printer's inscription is written using only points as punctuation, including a point at the end of the inscription:



**TYPOGRAPHIE ERNEST MEYER, RUE DE VERNEUIL, 22, A PARIS.**

Figure 12: The unique block of eight (severed) of the 80 lepta imprimatur (EM7a1 & EM7a2) with the magnified printer's inscription (Type 2)

### 3) Type 3 imprint

On the imprimaturs of the 10 Lepta (with and without "Control Number") and the 20 lepta single essays of the *large Hermes head* as well as on the essay "*Cérès 1858*" blue on blue paper, the printer's inscription is written using commas within the inscription and a point at the end of the imprint:



**TYPOGRAPHIE ERNEST MEYER, RUE DE VERNEUIL, 22, A PARIS.**

Figure 13: The unique item of the "*Cérès 1858*" essay (EM8) with the magnified printer's inscription (Type 3)

#### 4) Type 4 imprint

On the red “*Cérès without inscription*” essay, the printer’s inscription is printed with a total different style of typography, using commas within the inscription and a point at the end of the imprint:



Typographie Ernest Meyer, 22, rue de Verneuil, à Paris.

Figure 14: The unique complete sheet of the “*Cérès without inscription*” essay (EM9) with the magnified printer’s inscription (Type 4)

#### VI) Conclusion

The large Hermes head, and the “*Cérès 1858*” & “*Cérès without inscription*” imprimaturs and essays, bearing the Ernest Meyer’s imprints can be considered as the masterpieces of the typographic printing, highlighting the genius of the French artisans of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The aesthetic of their design as well as the fineness and the outstanding quality of their printing are definitively placing them at the top of the hierarchy of the most beautiful stamps ever printed. Every single piece of these twenty-five known items is a real pearl of the classical Greek collection and is a rarity as itself.

The proposed classification of this study should help for an easier identification and could evolve, allowing the addition of any new item that could be found in the future. The 25 items I have been able to identify to date are shown in this study with pictures, kindly coming from private collections, including mine, or from past auction catalogues.

We still have a lot to discover on the real detailed story of Ernest Meyer and on his precise contribution to the creation of the large Hermes head of Greece and the *Cérès* essays of France, as not a single official document, mentioning his name, has been found to this date. Anyway, these imprints & essays bearing Ernest Meyer’s inscriptions are continuing to fascinate the philatelists, as they have already done with so many earlier generations, since their discovery, more than a century ago. They are by themselves, an almost irrefutable proof that Ernest Meyer was the printer of the 1861 Paris issues of the large Hermes heads of Greece.

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