

Unlisted varieties in Harbin surcharges

Varieties in the North East People's Post Fourth and Fifth Surcharge on Mao Tse-Tung.

The 1947-8 Mao portrait issues were surcharged by Xinsheng Printing Company, Harbin, and issued sometime in October 1948. Listed in Yang's Liberated Area catalogue (1998) as NE125-6, NE126N, and NE127. The blue surcharge of \$1,500 on \$150, NE126N, is not listed in SG or Scott and Yang mentions it as a "new discovery" in the 1998 catalogue, hence it has a discontinuous catalogue number. The other three stamps are listed in SG as NE222-4 and in Scott as 1L90, 1L92 and 1L94.

Note the error in Yang's catalogue - NE127 has the surcharge on the \$300 (NE123), not \$500 as stated. The set, without the scarce (and perhaps dubious) NE126N, is shown below:



Illustration 1: Yang NE125-7

I say the NE126N blue surcharge is dubious, because to my eyes the green surcharge shown above is already on the blue side of green and I've never seen an image of the variety.

Yang lists numerous printing errors for this issue as shown in the table below. But there are plenty more to be found!

Basic Stamps		Varieties	
NE125	red surcharge of 500.00 on \$50 pale green	NE125a	surcharged on both sides
		NE125b	characters at top shifted to bottom (presumably surcharge shifted so that both top characters appear at the bottom?)
		NE125c	characters 伍佰圓 for 伍佰圓 (a catalogue misprint, probably 佰伍圓 for 伍佰圓 as NE126f?)
		NE125d	imperf pair
NE126	green surcharge of 1,500.00 on \$150 pale red	NE126a	surcharge inverted
		NE126b	bottom margin imperf
		NE126c	top 2 characters missing
		NE126d	作改 for 改作
		NE126e	作作 for 改作
		NE126f	佰伍 for 伍佰
NE126N	blue surcharge of 1,500.00 on \$150 pale red	NE126Na	作改 for 改作
		NE126Nb	佰伍圓 for 伍佰圓
NE127	black surcharge of 2,500.00 on \$300 green	NE127a	surcharge inverted
		NE127b	作改 for 改作
		NE127c	佰伍圓 for 伍佰圓
		NE127d	imperf pair

The error listed for NE126d (characters 改作 transposed) also occurs on NE125, although not listed in Yang.



Illustration 2: Yang NE125 unlisted 作改 for 改作 variety in SW corner

Very similar surcharges were made on first issue (1946) Mao stamps in November (the fifth surcharge on Mao, Yang NE128-130, SG NE230-2, Scott 1L89, 1L91, 1L93). It seems that the same typeface was used. It seems that none of the errors, that Yang listed for the October overprints, occur on the November overprints, although the settings of the overprint look very similar. However, Yang lists the small 2 & 2 missing varieties for the \$2,500 surcharge:

Basic Stamps		Varieties	
NE128	black surcharge of 500.00 on \$2 rose red		{none listed}
NE129	blue surcharge of 1,500.00 on \$5 orange		{none listed}
NE130	carmine surcharge of 2,500.00 on \$10 blue	NE130a	"2" of 2500 missing
		NE130b	"2" small and large in pair



Illustration 2: Yang NE128-30

The variety listed as NE130b (small 2) also occurs in the previous surcharge NE127 as shown in illustration 3. Other smaller numerals include varieties with a small "5", as shown in illustration 4. In addition, some stamps show a smaller zero, as shown in illustration 5. NOTE: The zero is also smaller in illustration 3, so this is a double error, small 2 and small zero:



Illustration 3: 2500.00 on \$300 with small "2" variety and also small second zero variety



Illustration 4: 2500.00 on \$300 with small "5" variety



Illustration 5: 2500.00 on \$300 with small second zero variety

The small 5 variety also occurs in the fifth surcharges \$1500 and fourth surcharges \$500, as shown in illustration 6:



Illustration 6: Yang NE129 and NE125 with small "5" variety

Although I haven't seen any examples, there may be other small 5 or small 0 varieties on all of the fourth and fifth surcharge stamps?

All the Roman numeral varieties above are unlisted in any of the catalogues and may occur together, as we've seen in illustration 3 above. The number of possible permutations of errors must be large!