

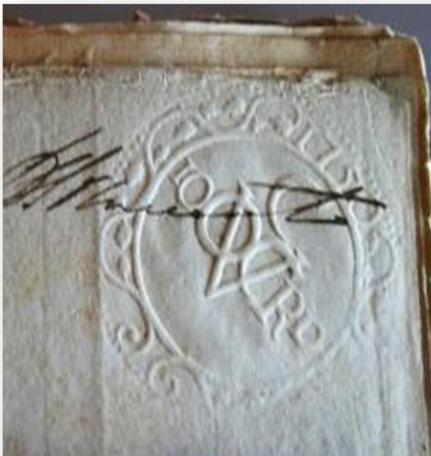


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Embossed paper stamps

Embossed paper stamps are created by a process of creating a raised (or, relief) image on a sheet of paper. Its opposite is called debossing, where a recessed or sunken image is created. Stamps can also have both embossing, and debossing elements present. Although paper embossing can be used in combination with printing and foil stamping, a paper stamp that has no ink, foiling or other printing elements is called a “blind” stamp. The creation of a paper stamp requires the application of a die to create the raised image on the paper. A die consists of two engraved metal plates that fit into each other so that when a sheet of paper is pressed between them the paper is permanently reshaped into the desired image.

Stamps were used to create legally valid documents during their certification process. A notary public in certifying a document would apply a stamp like this. Stamps were also used by legal and government offices to certify documents (for example, contracts, wills, deeds of sale). When the British Parliament passed what was to become known as the “Stamp Act” in 1765, essentially a tax on paper on which the embossed stamps were affixed to, Britain's North American colonies were required to use paper produced and heavily taxed in England, and at even higher rates in the colonies, for all legal documents and other paper consumables such as newspapers and playing cards. Taxed paper supplies and wares were required to display embossed revenue stamps (also known as impressed duty stamps) to show that they were legal wares. This tax was widely unpopular and generated intense local opposition in the colonies and played a role in sparking the American Revolution in 1776.



On the left is a blind embossed stamp (MOOC 6/9) on a will that is embossed with the Dutch East India Company's logo (“VOC”) and “10 Rixdollers”, while the stamp on the right with ink detail as well as both embossing and debossing detail is from the British Colonial Government (MOOC 6/9).