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## *Historical and Postal Matters of the Ionian Islands.*

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A group of small islands, viz: Corfu, Ithaka, Sevkada, Kephallonia, Kerigo, and Zante bear combined the name "Ionian Islands," which are situated in the Mediterranean Sea, in Europe. Long before Christ, old time history mentioned already the island of Ithaka (Siek da Timotheus, die Iliche des Cranikus) and also Kephallonia, and both islands play a great part in old time Greek mythology as a part of what is now called the Kingdom of Greece at that time ruled by the heroic Spartana, and also during the old time Greek-Persian wars, as the Persian Kings Xerxes and Ataxerxes with their armies crossed the Hellespont river and at least conquered old Greece (by the Thermophyle Mountain treachery).

In later years the Ionian Islands for centuries belonged to the powerful and much feared Republic of Venice (Doge von Venedig). In 1797 the Ionian Islands by the Treaty of Campo Formio became the property of France. As in 1814, Napoleon I. Emperor of France was finally defeated, and sent in exile to St. Helena, the united powers of Prussia, Russia, and England at the Peace of Paris, concluded

all the above mentioned islands should combine, and declared them a Republic under "British protection" November 15, 1815.

The Republic of the Ionian Islands existed up to November 14, 1863. Meantime the leading European powers had created what is now known as the Kingdom of Greece, and in 1864 the Republic of the Ionian Islands became royal Greek territory, in accordance with the Peace of London. On May 1, 1864, post-offices were opened by the Republic of the Ionian Islands at various places, and the fee for mail matter had to be paid in cash. (English money circulated in the Ionian Republic). On July 27, 1857, the tariff for postal fees was changed, and the Parliament of the Islands concluded to issue postage stamps. But money was scarce and the Republic was poor, and so it took two years before the stamps were ready, and on May 15, 1859, a set of three denominations appeared. The values were 1 obolos (equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  c.) red yellow, 2 oboloi ( $\frac{1}{2}$  c.) dark blue, and 4 oboloi (1 c.) wine red.

The value 2 oboloi has the watermark "2" in small points, and the value 4 oboloi has the watermark "4" in small points, but the value 1 obolos is without watermark. What is the reason for this? Philatelic authorities in Europe vary about it, but the