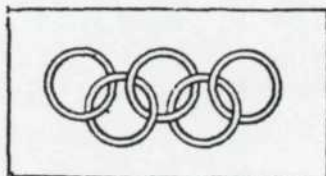


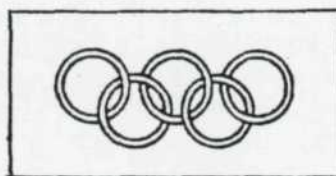
INTERLACING OF OLYMPIC RINGS

Some label descriptions in this catalog refer to Olympic rings as being "original" or "official" designs. The usual ring arrangement (3 rings above 2 rings) has been interlaced many different ways on stamps, labels, seals, correspondence, invitations, programs, trophies, etc.

The two major ways that rings have been interlaced on Olympic flags are presented below:



Original



Official

Note that the two designs are "mirror-images" of each other. The original pattern was manufactured into a flag by a Parisian department store, Au Bon Marche, in 1913. The above-depicted original flag has been flown at only one Olympic Games, the VIIth Olympiad in Antwerp, in 1920. The "official" flag is more important in that it is the flag pattern that has been used at all Olympic Games since 1920. It is the Original Presentation Flag. Here is the story of that flag:

The official report of the Olympic Games of 1920 states, "At the closing ceremony and after the equestrian events, the Belgian Olympic Committee offered to the International Olympic Committee, in remembrance of the Antwerp Games, an Olympic flag embroidered in silk." The latter flag's ring interlacing was a "mirror-image" design of the original flag and is the flag still used at Olympic events today. The I.O.C. declared this design to be the official Olympic pattern at a meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 1957.

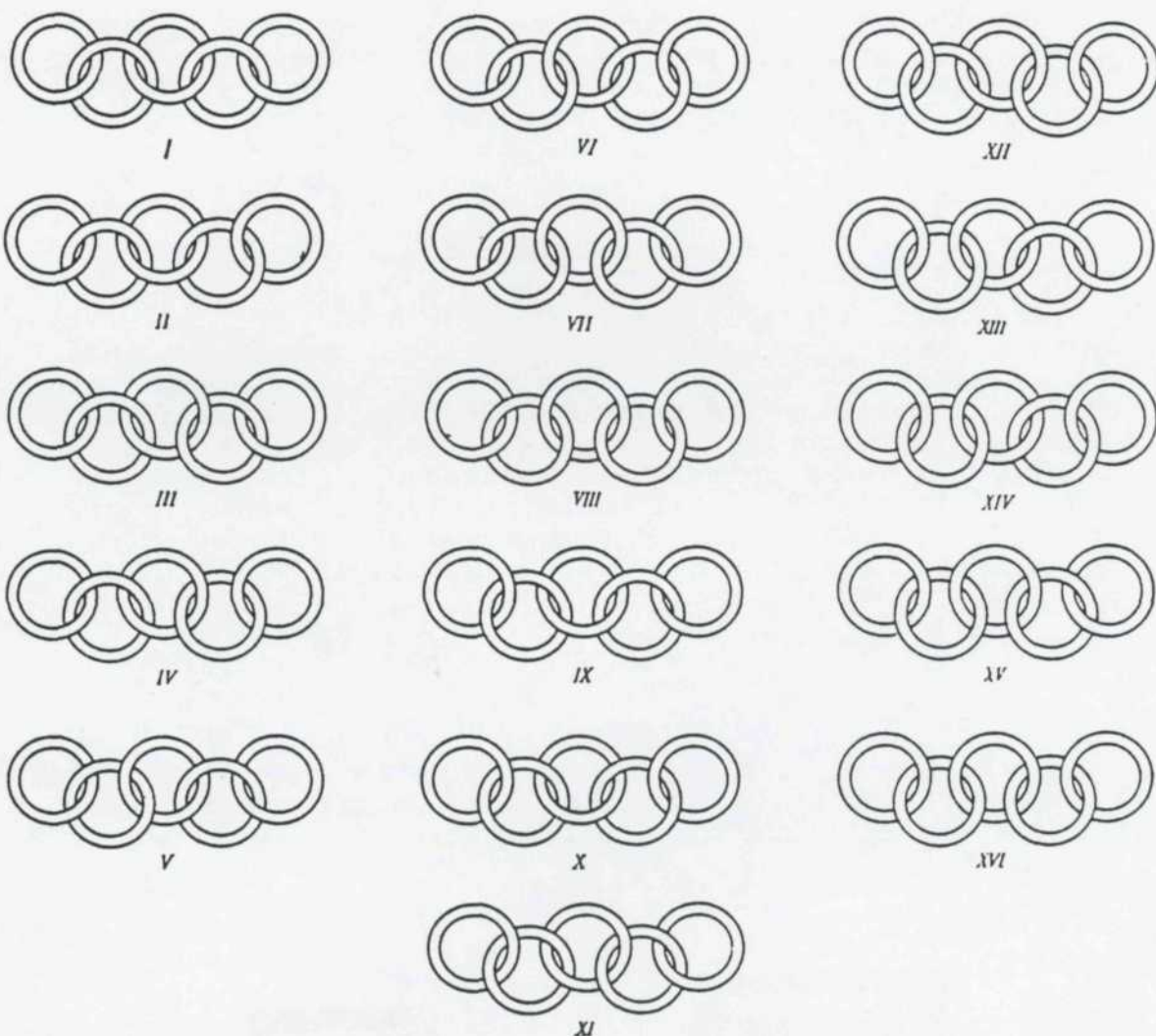
The first use of the 5-ring Olympic symbol occurred in 1928 on both stamps and labels, as follows:

1. Portugal: a postal tax stamp and a postal tax due stamp, respectively illustrated below.
2. Label Nos. 1 to 4 of St. Moritz & No.1 of Amsterdam.



The following sixteen different ring-interlacings are reproduced from an article by Travis L. Land in *Western Stamp Collector*(now *Stamp Collector*) of October 20, 1959. Ring pattern "XI" is the official interlacing as adopted by the International Olympic Committee. Pattern "VI" is the "mirror-image" design discussed in the accompanying article. Many of the patterns illustrated below have been used on postage stamps & labels; those most widely used include nos. I, VI(original) and XI(official).

The first ring-stamps, of Portugal, utilized design XIV. The first ring-labels, of St.Moritz, utilized design VI, the original interlacing pattern.



References:

Travis L. Land's "Olympic Week Recalls History of the Five-Ring Symbol of the Olympics." Published in *Stamp Collector* of October 20, 1959, p.8

Arlene Crosby's "History of the Five Olympic Rings," a philatelic exhibit which won a gold award at the American Topical Association Show, at Montreal, in 1970.