



Dummy News and Views

the Newsletter of the United States Stamp Society - Dummy Stamps Study Group

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Welcome to the Dummy Stamps Study Group's Forty-Fifth Newsletter

This newsletter is produced quarterly by the United States Stamp Society's - Dummy Stamps Study Group for your information and pleasure. We hope that the information included in this newsletter will be informative, useful and encourage your enjoyment of collecting dummy/test stamps. Our goal is to keep you up-to-date with the latest information available to our group. Questions, comments and articles proposed for publication should be directed to Terry R. Scott, Chairman of the Dummy Stamps Study Group at terryrscott@comcast.net

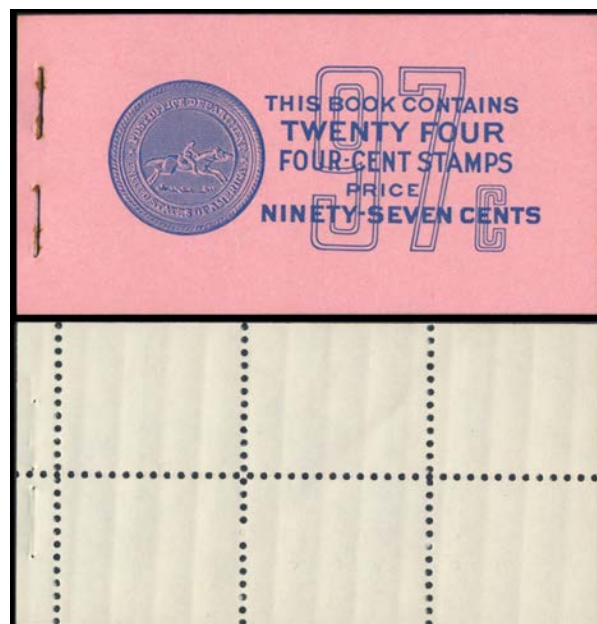
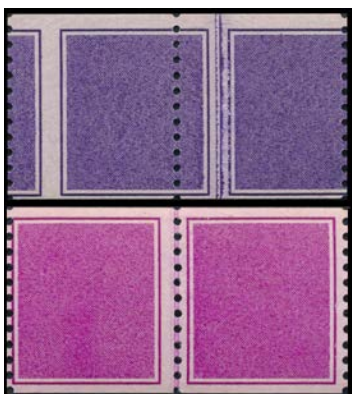
Previously Unknown Ashton Potter Convertible Dummy Booklet

by Michael O. Perry

In 1913, the first international stamp exposition in the United States was held in New York City. At that show, Joseph E. Ralph, the Director of the Bureau of Engraving & Printing, gave a speech where he told about the new experimental rotary press Benjamin Stickney had created. Ralph invited attendees to come to the BEP the following week to see the press in action. Anyone who took him up on the offer may have seen the "1-2-3-4" Hamilton Head (Scott TD19) dummy stamps being printed.

While no dummy stamps are known to have been distributed at that 1913 stamp show, it is possible they were. We do know that several test stamps were made available to collectors at later stamp shows where the Post Office and various private printers had exhibits and booths to show their work. A brief summary of shows where collectors were able to obtain test stamps follows.

At the 1959 Parade of Postal Progress in Detroit, the Post Office Department demonstrated new equipment and gave out examples of TD95, TD96 and TDB5.



In 1992, at the World Columbian Stamp Expo in Chicago, Stamp Venturers gave out coil rolls of 100 TD119 and TD120 to people who came to their booth. Some collectors were lucky enough to get complete coil "sticks" containing 13 connected coil rolls.

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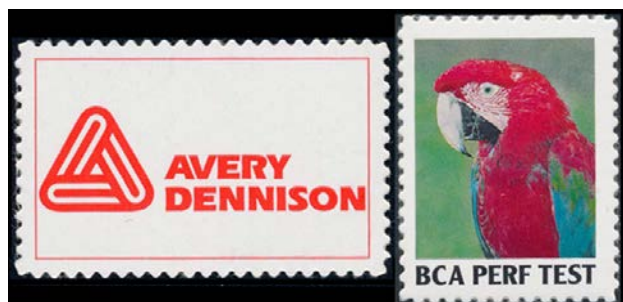
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The 1996 NAPEX show in Washington, D.C., was the source of at least four test stamps: TD127A, TD127B, TD127C and TD128. These were distributed by USPS representative, Joseph Peng, at the end of his presentation "Evolution of the U.S. Postage Stamp - Past and Present."

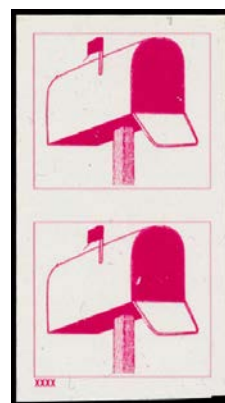


Only one pane of 20 TD127C is known, and it has been broken up.



Several test stamps (most of which are not listed in the Scott Catalogue since they were probably produced just for stamp collectors) were made available at PACIFIC '97.

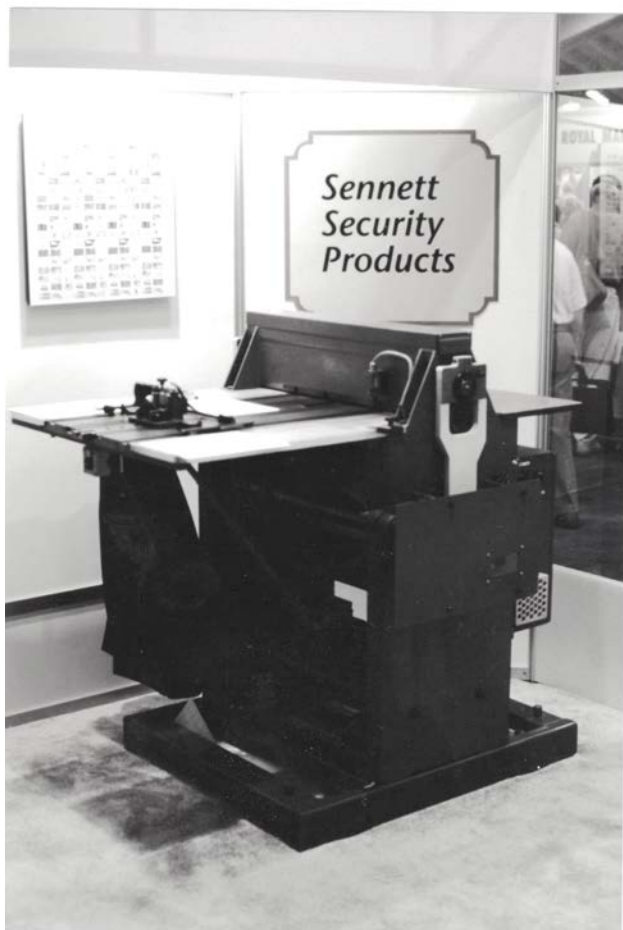
The Avery Dennison booth distributed a souvenir ATM sized pane with images related to San Francisco landmarks. A few panes lacked the horizontal defacement lines added to prevent use as postage stamps. These are not test stamps nor are they listed in the Scott Catalog.



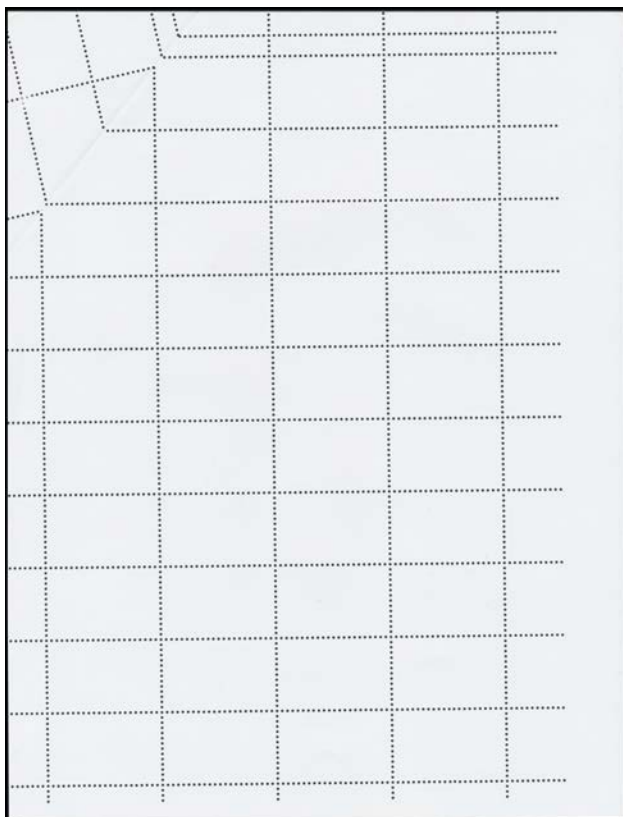
The Avery booth also had a self-adhesive linerless coil roll of 50 TD132 - those Red Mailbox stamps were not supposed to be given out to show attendees, but a stamp dealer managed to obtain the roll and sold pairs and singles.

Sennett Security Printers had a sheet-fed perforation machine at their booth. People were given gummed sheets of 8-1/2" x 11" blank paper that could be run through the machine to create what look like 40-subject sheets of commemorative size blank test stamps. The gum has a green tint, so those blank "demonstration" stamps are easy to identify. Some collectors created EFO mis-perforated sheets by folding one of the corners over. Collectors need to be aware these so-called test stamps are offered in auctions and on eBay, often selling for ridiculous prices. They are not listed in the Scott Catalogue.

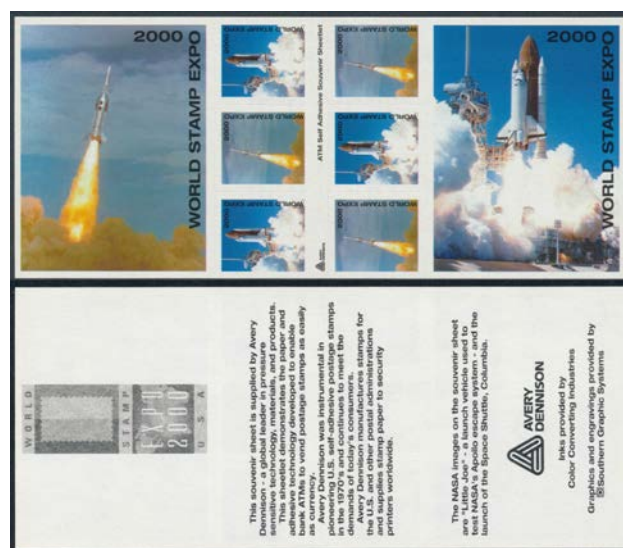
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The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service had a booth at PACIFIC '97. They distributed samples of a new format of Duck stamps. Previously, Duck stamps had only been issued in sheets of 28 water activated gum stamps. But, beginning in 1998, they also sold a self-adhesive stamp sheetlet containing just one Duck stamp. Since the sheetlets were the same size as a dollar bill, they could be stored in the cash register of sporting goods stores. These are not test stamps and are not listed in the Scott Catalogue.



At the 2000 World Stamp Expo, held in Anaheim, California, Avery gave out a souvenir sheetlet that had images of NASA rockets. This item was not listed by Scott since it was clearly a souvenir made just for the stamp show.



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Banknote Corporation of America gave out a souvenir card with series of 12 stamp images showing progressive color impressions of an American Eagle design. These are not test stamps nor are they listed in the Scott Catalog.



Sennett Security gave out three items at World Stamp Expo 2000. The first is a self-adhesive linerless coil of 100 that has a color version of their corporate logo (the same design as found on TD119 and TD120). Sennett also gave out sheets of 20 commemorative sized stamps with a similar eagle and trees design. The coils were almost certainly test stamps, but the sheet stamp may also be legitimate test stamps (they have a 1997 copyright date) Neither of these is listed in the Scott Catalog.



The USPS issued four space related high-value holographic stamps at World Stamp Expo 2000. One of those was an \$11.75 round hologram stamp depicting a view of the Earth (Scott 3412, shown below at the right) similar to the hologram Sennett gave out (shown below at the left). While the hand-out



hologram might have been part of some sort of test (note that it doesn't have the \$11.75 denomination printed on it), it is not listed in the Scott Catalog.

There are undoubtedly several other test stamps that were first distributed at stamp shows, but you get the idea. While many test stamps are scarce and very expensive, sometimes you can get lucky and get them for free! With the exception of the Red Mailbox coil, all the above test or demonstration stamps were available for free if you were in the right place at the right time.

So, with all that in mind, you might well imagine that members of the Dummy Stamps Study Group who were able to attend the World Stamp Show held in New York in 2016 were looking forward to seeing the private printer displays. We all hoped there would be something new to add to our collections. But, it didn't work out that way.

We were surprised to find Ashton Potter was the only printing company with a booth! It didn't take long to spot a previously unknown test convertible booklet in their display case. The bad news is at least three members of the DSSG tried unsuccessfully to get samples of the new test stamps. However, for the record, we want to show what the new dummy convertible booklet looks like.

As seen in the photos on the following page, this is a double-sided pane of 20 self-adhesive stamps. The images are distorted due to the fact the pane was inside a glass case, so getting a photo from directly above the pane was impossible. The Ashton Potter representative said it was produced by them for internal use and was not distributed to the USPS. He indicated the test panes were used between 2005 and 2009, during production of Scott Nos. 3966a, 3978b, 4126a, 4126c and 4126e. Later convertible booklets produced by Ashton Potter were a different size and format, so a different test stamp was used for them.



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Based on the photos taken by three DSSG members, we can be reasonably sure about many of the details of this test stamp. For example, the pane is 6-1/4" x 1-3/4" and has gauge 11-1/4 x 10-3/4 serpentine die cuts. The pane was printed with at least three colors of ink. The words "ASHTON POTTER" and the wavy lines in the background are printed with a dark green (or possibly a gray-green) ink. The "00" denominations, the words "SECURITY PRINTERS" and the simulated perforations around the defaced test stamp image on the cover's label are printed in black. The two arrows before and after the words "SECURITY PRINTERS" are printed with a silver ink. It looked like this was printed entirely by offset printing - probably from a set of three 1,200 subject plates on Ashton Potter's Mueller Martini A76 offset press.

There is no plate number on either side of the test pane. The words "Peel here to fold" are printed in three of the four peel strips. Interestingly, the two Lady Liberty panes (3966a and 3978b) also have that wording in three of their peel strips, but the three Liberty Bell panes omitted that wording on all the peel strips. The two peel strips on the side with just eight test stamps have 9-3/4 gauge rouletting in the center

(the peel strips on the 12-stamp side have no rouletting in the center).

Until actual examples of this new test pane find their way into collector hands, some details will have to remain unknown. For example, is the pane tagged or not? There was no sign of the usual clear lacquer on the booklet cover's label that can be seen on the regular postage stamp panes (the lacquer blocks the yellow-green glow given off by the standard pre-phosphored paper used for regular stamps). So, while Ashton Potter might have produced tagged test stamps using pre-phosphored paper produced by Fasson/Glatfelter, it seems likely they applied a layer of coating (or ink like the BEP did on TD136) to mask the zinc ortho-silicate tagging. Another option would have been to use paper that wasn't phosphor coated, but that would require ordering a separate supply of untagged paper. That seems quite unlikely.

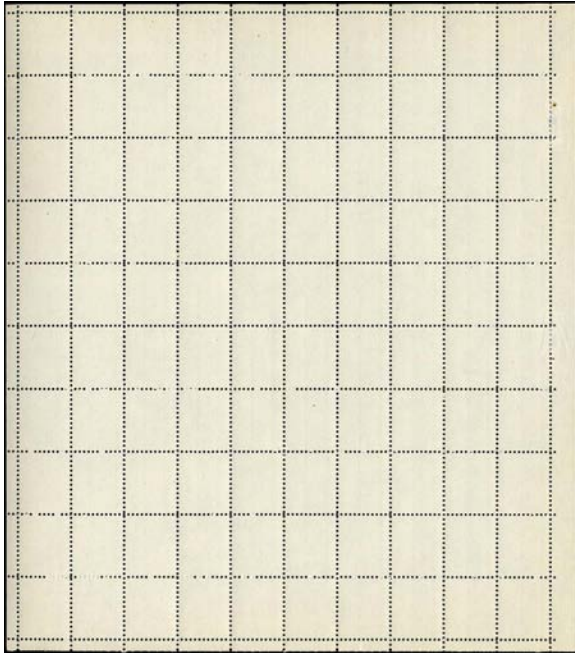
If past practice is any guide, there is a decent chance examples of these test stamps will eventually reach collector hands, so knowing what to look for might speed up the process. Until an actual pane can be shown to the Scott Catalog editors, it will not receive a catalog number. □

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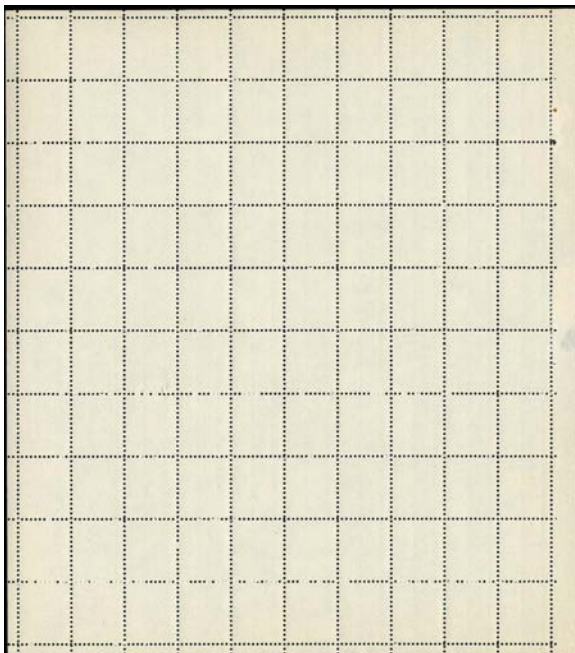
Recent Auctions of Interest to Dummy Stamp Collectors

by Terry R. Scott

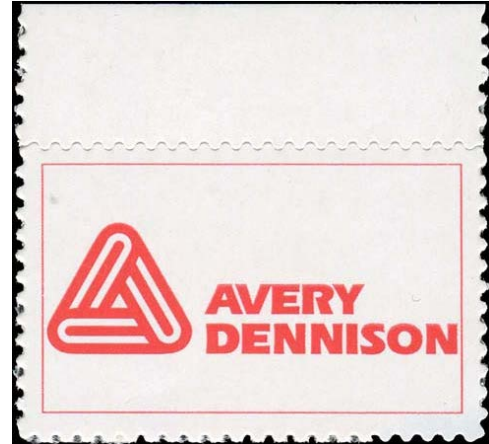
On September 29 - October 1, 2016 Regency Superior held Public Auction #120 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 20% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 2330 ** USA (TD84A) 1956 BLANK TEST STAMP, FULL PANE Full pane of 100, fully gummed stamp paper, perf 11¼x10½. Thins in margin, fine to very fine. Cat \$1,250.00 Photo. Est. \$400.00 Not Sold



Lot 2331 ** USA (TD84A) 1956 BLANK TEST STAMP, FULL PANE Full pane of 100, fully gummed stamp paper, perf 11¼x10½. Thins in margin, fine to very fine. Cat \$1,250.00 Photo. Est. \$350.00 Not Sold



Lot 2332 ** USA (TD127C) 1996 AVERY DENNISON (-) RED Simple design shows company logo, die cut self-adhesive, very fine. Listed, but not valued in Scott. Photo Est. \$1,000.00 Realized \$300.00

On October 4-6, 2016 Michael E. Aldrich Auctions held Sale #89 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



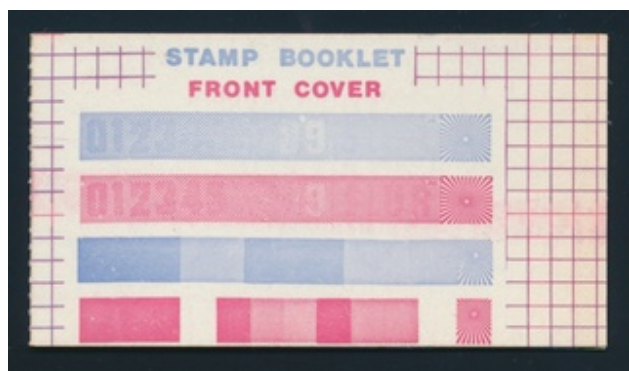
Lot 1218 (TD108) Carmine, "For Testing Purposes Only", Line Pair, OG, NH, stunning vibrant color and proof like impression, quite fresh and Superb Gem, there are reportedly only three Line Pairs known of which this one certainly has to be the Finest Known, a truly amazing line pair of this extreme rarity, the catalog value listed is for a pair, Scott includes a dash for a line pair, Photo. Cat. Val. \$1,900.00 Not sold. Reserve not met.

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On October 4-6, 2016 Sparks Auctions held Sale #22 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.

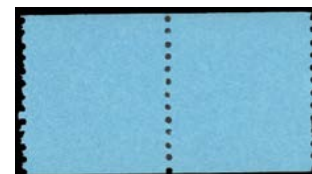
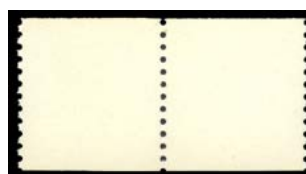


Lot 710 TDB36 ** **Test Stamps, 1988 Jack London Booklet.** Complete unexploded booklet, 2 panes of 10 blank stamps with a blue border, #12 on cover and on panes inside, plus the issued booklet #BK150 \$5 face to compare. The test booklet has a back inside cover write up on the American Garden stamps while the issued booklet has an ad for souvenir pages. Seldom seen item, very fine. Photo Scott \$410.00 Realized \$75.00



Lot 711 TDB48 ** **1980s Dummy Test Booklet** with "Front Cover" in red. Complete booklet containing single pane of 8, dull gum "For Testing Purposes Only" stamps. Made by Goebel of Germany from materials supplied by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Printed cover in red and blue shows various printers test and registration markings. Very scarce booklet, mint never hinged very fine. Photo. Scott \$900.00 Realized \$130.00

On October 6, 2016, October 28, 2016 and December 2, 2016 Paradise Valley Stamp Company held Sales #F385, #F387 and #F389 that contained the following test stamps. There is a no Buyer's Premium for this sale.

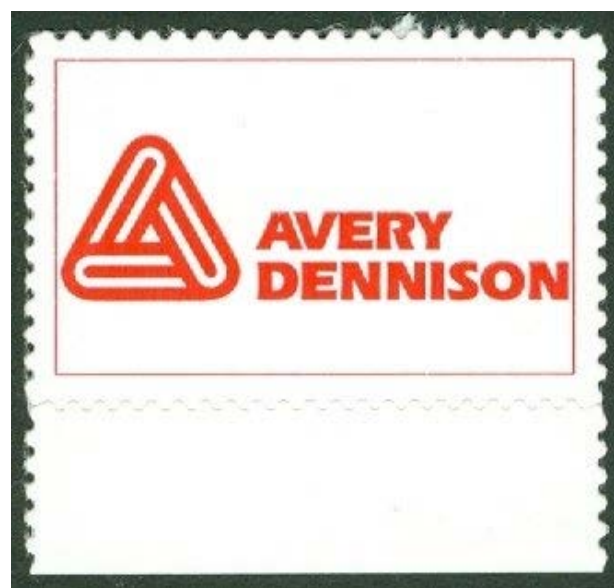


Lot 2083 1930s, ELECTRIC VENDORS (ZEIGLE), INC. BLANK WHITE RESP. BLUE COIL PAIRS NH, #TD79, mint never hinged, very fine, Cat. \$60.00 Photo (Image) Not sold in any of the three auctions listed above.

On October 21-22, 2016 Matthew Bennett International held Sale #354 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 7 Disparate Balance of a Wide Ranging Collection, including some nicer stamps, plate blocks, a nice set of National Parks sheets, some face value items, Postal Stationery, some covers, a collection of Telegraph stamps, scarce test coils, a stockbook with quantities of officials, postage currency, etc. A true mish mash. No photo. Estimate \$1,500.00 - \$2,000.00 Realized \$5,250.00.

On November 11-12, 2016 Dutch Country Auctions held Sale #307 that contained the following test stamp. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 447 ** VF TD127C VF NH w/ bottom margin, Avery Dennison self-adhesive test stamp. Photo. Est. \$300.00 - \$600.00 Realized \$145.00

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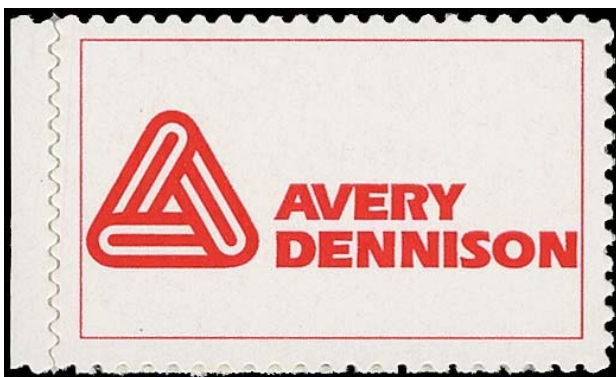
On November 18-19, 2016 Daniel F. Kelleher, LLC held Sale #694 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 18% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 189 */o/ U.S., Coil Accumulation, complete coil rolls, partial rolls, line strips, et cetera from Washington Franklins to Modern, including airmail and test coils, a few stuck down, high catalog value accumulation starting at a very low price, o.g., mostly never hinged, Fine to Very Fine. Photo. Scott \$5,500 Estimate \$600.00 - \$800.00 Realized \$850.00.

On November 19-20, 2016 Regency Superior held Public Auction #121 that contained the following test stamp. There is a 20% Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 1579 ** USA (TD37) 1910-20 MULTIPOST RED COIL ROLL, Fresh MINT never hinged roll with 200 pairs of TD37 (cat \$30 each pair). Fine to very fine. No photo. Catalog \$6,000.00. Not sold.



Lot 1580 ** USA (TD127C) 1996 AVERY DENNISON. Simple design shows company logo in red, die cut self-adhesive, left margin single. Very fine. Listed but not valued in Scott. Photo. Estimate: \$400.00 Realized \$220.00

Lot 2144 ***/ USA 1869-2000 SEVERAL COLLECTION REMAINDERS WITH MUCH FACE, INCLUDING COILS Large lot, currently housed in 2 banker boxes, consisting of multiple (mostly mint) collection remainders and mint stock on pages, with great deal of face and scattered better (up to \$100 stamps). Although there are no rarities, there is a lot of solid value for the small dealer. We noted multiple sets of Parks (perf and imperf), Famous Americans, 1983 Officials (including 2 sheets of 20 offset \$1), MINT Bureau precancels (Liberty, Prominent Americans and Americana, including large partial roll of 'PRESORT,' no lines). There are also stock sheets with multiple copies of many mint 2¢ Reds, what appears to be almost complete roll of 500 Dummy coil (TD107b) and few other test coils, binder with lots of used Large Banknotes and Washington-Franklins and small collection with more than \$1,100 cat in stuck-down mint (COMPLETE Pan-Americans, Louisiana Purchase, C1-C6, more). In addition, there is a small box of full and partial coil rolls, including 3.1¢ Guitar, 3.5¢ Violins, 7.9¢ Drum, 8.4¢ Piano, 5.2¢ Sleigh (Nos. 1, 2) and 9.3¢ Mail Wagon (Nos. 1, 2). Total catalog value is well in excess of \$4,000, with additional face value well over \$1,100. Take some time with this one. Ex-Marvin Frey. No photo. Estimate \$1,000.00 - \$1,500.00 Realized \$950.00

Lot 2189 **/* EFO 1857-1992 GROUP OF UNWORKED EFO MATERIAL IN STOCK BOOK Stock book containing roughly 700 items of EFOs of all kinds as singles, pairs and multiples. A quick look revealed misperfs, over-inkings, under-inkings, tagging ghosts, wartime perfs, color shifts, setoffs, ghost plate numbers, miscut coils with partial plate numbers, some test material and more. Most is MINT never hinged, with the majority of the material dating from the 1950s-'70s, more definitives than commemoratives and heavy duplication of some items. Ex-Marvin Frey. No photo. Estimate \$600.00 - \$800.00 Realized \$750.00

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Lot 2204 ** **EFO 1930s-70s EFO HODGEPODGE, MANY ON PAGES** Couple hundred items (some multiples), mostly MINT never hinged of all types of EFO items (major and minor), many on pages, some as type studies. Great variety of material, including inking flaws, gutter snipes, missing perfs, color shifts, perforation shifts, over-inkings, test stamps, ghost numbers, wiping smears, couple double papers and more. Well worth digging through. Ex-Marvin Frey. No photo. Estimate \$400.00 - \$600.00 Realized \$500.00

On November 30, 2016 Vance Auctions Limited held Sale #320 that contained the following test stamps. There is a no Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 3928 * TD107, Test stamp coils as singles, pairs, strips of 4 and Joint Line strips of 4. Incl. regular issue PLUS VARIETY showing horiz INK SMEARS. (Ed. Note: These are defacement lines) VF, NH (22 stamps. No photo. Est. \$45.00+ Realization unknown.

On December 7, 2016 Downeast Stamps held Sale #304 that contained the following test stamp. There is a 10% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 688 ** TD100, test stamp, imperf block of four, 1954 Experimental Territorial Centennial of Nebraska, XF, NH Photo. Est. \$120.00 Realized \$85.00

On December 7-8, 2016 R. Maresch & Sons, Ltd. held Sale #532 that contained the following test stamp. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 1451 ** **TD136 TEST STAMPS: TD136: 1997**, a complete COIL ROLL OF 5000, n.h. and very fine. No photo. Realized \$140.00 CDN

On December 14, 2016 Robert A Siegel Auction Galleries, Inc. held Sale #1145 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.

Lot 725 ** **Back-of-Book Errors**. Small group including Nos. E15c, O135a, O141a, printer's waste of No. O148, also Test Stamp errors Nos. TD107c and TD109b, Very Fine group, one certificate accompanies. No test stamp photos. Cat. \$2,950.00 Realized \$550.00

On December 29, 2016 Hunt & Co. held Sale #1216 that contained the following test stamps. There is a 15% Buyer's Premium for this sale.



Lot 170 ** US - Test Stamps. Scott TD90, VF NH, Pair. Photo. Catalog Value \$45.00 Realization unknown.

Requests for Articles for The United States Specialist

Leonard Piskiewicz, Editor of *The United States Specialist*, is always looking for articles of interest for inclusion in our society's monthly publication. The type of articles Len needs most are the shorter ones, one or two-page articles. If you are considering writing an article for *The United States Specialist*, please contact him for instructions. If the article is regarding dummy stamps, I would appreciate knowing

about it also. Many members of the DSSG have written articles on dummy stamps and other stamps for this publication. It is rewarding and other USSS members benefit greatly from the information that is published in *The United States Specialist*.

Leonard can be reached by e-mail at: lenp@pacbell.net ☐

This issue and all past issues of the Dummy Stamps Study Group Newsletter - Dummy News and Views may be found at:

<http://www.usstamps.org/dssg.html>