

Methods and accessories for the Shift Hunter
(written at the request of a group
of the Shift Hunters.)

Let us assume that the Shift Hunter has an accumulation of 100,000 stamps that are to be gone over for Double Transfers. It may seem an endless task but patience, ingenuity and a little attention to efficiency will shorten the work and the Hunter will be surprised at the rapidity with which the stamps pass under the glass. In general these remarks will apply to both large and small lots.

Above all - PROTECT THE EYES.

The Light.

Purchase a 100 watt, Blue Bulb, Mazda light, one of the daylight lights with clear, transparent blue glass. Place the light in an adjustable holder with an opaque shade over the light. Do not use a semitransparent shade. No light must pass directly from the lamp to the eyes. Turn the shade over the light until the eyes cannot see the lamp and adjust the lamp low over the desk top and fairly close to the stamps.

Do not work by daylight. Daylight is too variable. Use the Blue Bulb even in the daytime.

The Desk.

Use a low chair, a high table top or place a large book on top of the desk. The object is to bring the stamps, laid out for inspection, close enough to the eyes so that the Hunter does not bend his back into a cramped position. Physical discomfort tires the nerves and adds to eye strain. Take it easy and be comfortable.

The Glass.

Purchase a Bausch & Lomb, Eng-aver's Glass, No. 143, at \$3.60. This glass may be obtained at any Optical Supply house or from the Crary-Wolf Co., 21 S. Main St., Akron, Ohio.

This glass has compound lens, protected by an ebonite frame which prevents scratching the center of the lens when repeatedly handled. It has a LARGE FIELD but no distortion at the edges and is very easy on the eye. With only a slight movement of the wrist one may explore the entire surface of a stamp of normal size. There are many glasses with higher magnification which may be used for detailed study of selected stamps, but they are too trying on the eyes and too slow for use in going over a large number of stamps. A shift that will be overlooked by this glass is hardly worth saving.

This glass is my "Double Barrelled Hunting Gun". For target practice such as illustration work I use a higher powered "Rifle".

The Method.

Whether the stamps be in bulk, in packages of one hundred, or on small pieces of cover; whether they be all face side up or woefully mixed; whether they be all of one kind or hodge-podge; don't stop to straighten them out. Fill

the left hand with stamps, pass them to the right hand, one at a time by a sliding movement of the thumb and with the right hand lay out five rows of ten stamps each.

Every stamp face up but upside down or right side up just as they happen to fall. Lay them straight, not crooked. Train the eye to so recognize the stamp design that you can see a Shift upside down as easily as right side up. You will travel slowly at first but you will become an accurate Hunter and in the end you will save many hours of time in laying out the stamps.

Go over the fifty stamps that you have laid out, with the B. & L. glass. Lay aside any stamp that has any speck of color where color should not be. Do not stop to study them in detail. Your main job is to make time and to separate the black sheep from the white ones. You will study the "selects" later on at your leisure.

Lay out fifty more stamps, directly on top of the first fifty, look them over and repeat the operation until you have about twenty-five layers. Now you may count one pile if you wish and tie them all up in bundles or sweep the entire seven hundred and fifty into a box or envelope.

You have now looked over seven hundred and fifty stamps. Give the eyes a rest for a few minutes on some other work, then "shoot another 750". Not over lots of seven hundred and fifty at one sitting. My record is one thousand per hour. How many can you do?

Keep a Hunting desk for this work. Stop at any time. Cover the table up with a large piece of cardboard, leave it until the next time, remove the board and you are already started again. A large percentage of the Hunters time is wasted in "getting out" and "putting away". Efficiency and ingenuity saves time.

What is a Double Transfer or Shift?

1. A Shift always shows COLOR where COLOR SHOULD NOT BE, but NEVER is lack of Color WHERE COLOR SHOULD BE.

2. Many stamps show color where color should not be and still are not double transfers. Such extra color may be produced in many ways, such as,

- a. Heavy ink that runs.
- b. Slipping of one sheet under another just after printing.
- c. A "kiss". Buckled paper that hits the plate and then flattens out for the full impression.
- d. Paper drags on being removed from the plate.
- e. Poorly wiped plate.
- f. Ink smudges due to poor ink or careless handling.
- g. Heavy ink often transfers to the next sheet above, showing on the back of the upper sheet. If this sheet be moved and pressure applied, the design may again transfer back to the first sheet and look like a double impression or a shift, but the "double" will be blurred, indistinct and not to be mistaken for a Shift.
- h. Double impression, (Double print.)
- i. Etc. (Above data obtained from five years experience in a print shop.)

3. A Shift or a Double Transfer must show a clear, sharp doubling of some portion of the design. The doubled lines may be immediately adjacent to the original lines or far removed.

C. W. Bedford,
319 Vaniman Street,
Akron, Ohio.