

BUREAU
ISSUES
ASSOCIATION
—
PLATE
VARIETIES
COMMITTEE

U. S. PLATE VARIETIES

Shift Hunter Letter No. 40

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319 Vaniman Street - Akron, Ohio

SHIFT
HUNTER
CLUB

Subscriptions \$2.00 a year, beginning and ending in September.

#3 Flat Plate	#4 PLATE CRACK 1/ Perf.11 1917	10656 Reported by W.W.DAVIS.
#13	#14 Compare with the crack in Plate No. 10645, in report #4.	#15 See 5460

Mr. W. H. Schneider finds a number of surface cracks in the left margin, adjacent plate No. 5388 of the 2¢-Hudson Fulton. Illustrated at right.

5388

At one time Vance Holden reported, thru Mr Ward's column in Mekeels, a break in a relief of the 2¢-1922, showing a white spot on the fraction bar of the left numeral that occurs in the first five vertical rows of the upper left pane on plate 17041. Mr Kuespert sends us a left plate number block showing the variety and a right plate block without it. This is a break in one of the reliefs and may show up on later plates wherever this relief happened to be used. The other three panes should be checked on plate 17041 and also the next few plates following.



Plate cracks such as illustrated above are among the outstanding varieties of the later issues. We call them the "Twentieth Century Classics". Can anyone tell us whether this crack runs down further into the plate? Mr Davis has long been a student of plate varieties and we will hear from him frequently in the future.

Report by Don F. Lybarger, Chairman. Offset Plate Varieties.

- 8418 Plate numbers of the Offset issue were NOT inserted directly on the Zinc plate. Eight blank spaces were scraped out of the master negative and the individual numbers of each plate inserted in these spaces. The numbers were first printed on paper then photographed on a negative and strippings from these negatives applied to the blank spaces on the master negative. At first the numbers were engraved on steel plates and then photographed from prints. Later the numbers were printed from type and more rarely from a rubber stamp. After the master negative had made one plate the numbers were removed and 8 new numbers inserted for the next plate. Thus many plates were made from the same master negative and plate varieties on one plate will repeat in the same position on many other plates. These are better spoken of as NEGATIVE VARIETIES rather than as Plate Varieties. See S.H.L. No.37. Where sequence of numbers were similar, it was common practice to scratch out only one or two or three digits. Often this was done by "opaquing out" with special paint or ink and then scratching in the numbers by hand. There are many irregularities in the shape and alignment of the digits in plate numbers of this issue.
- 11975 On many, perhaps most of the plates, no two of the 8 plate numbers on a given plate are exactly the same. The information, if once recorded would indicate whether a given right plate number came from the upper or lower right hand pane, etc.
- 9266 By reason of the method used for numbering the plates of this issue, there are several well defined types of plate numbers. These may be classified as follows:
- 11896 Type 1. 2 1/2 mm tall by 8 to 11 mm long. A thin, neat numeral. Doubtless made from photographs of engraved numerals. (Nos. 8418, 12913)
 - 11406 Type 2. 3 to 4 mm tall by 10 to 13 mm long. Thick numerals of the rubber type variety. (Nos. 8610, 9350, 9320)
 - 9993 Type 3. 3 mm tall by 9 to 13 mm long. A light type numeral. (Nos. 9266, 11643, 11975)
 - 12243 Type 4. Same as type 3 but a heavy type numeral. (Nos. 9993, 11406, 11896)
 - 9987 Type 5. Hand made numerals. (Nos. 9987, 12234)

Philip Ward has already described this heavy scratch on the present 25¢ stamp and Mr. DeWitt is kind enough to send the item to us for illustration. As Mr Ward says in his column in Mekeel's, it looks like some one had built a bridge over Niagara Falls. There are thousands of plate scratches that are not worthy of chronicle but items such as this may be worthy of description.

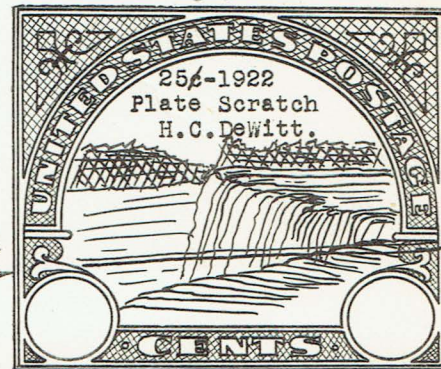


PLATE VARIETIES COMMITTEE

C. W. BEDFORD, CHAIRMAN

Report No. 3

Description of Illustrations

These four illustrations represent only a few of the many Shifted Transfers made by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing just after the American Bank Note Company finished its contract for furnishing stamps to the United States Government. To show all the shifts on the "Triangle" issues would require many pages.

By this method of reporting plate varieties nearly all the necessary description is placed on the illustrations. Look over your duplicates carefully. Sometimes you will look over several hundred without finding a plate variety and again the only stamp you have will give you the "Thrill that comes ONCE in a Lifetime". Just pick up your Specialized U. S. Catalog and note how many Bureau printed stamps have a "Double Transfer" listed under the varieties.

Webster N. Jones, Jr., age 12, brought his collection of stamps to my home this summer, to show me the results of his efforts. I found in among the 'kiddie collection' a major shift that within the month he sold for \$5.00 and made the first payment on a bicycle.

Wherever there is a stamp there may be a PLATE VARIETY.

Get the habit of using a glass on every stamp. Plate varieties are not common. Those who find them do so by keeping at it with great patience. Use a Bausch & Lomb engravers glass to prevent eyestrain. You may get one for \$3.60 in any large optical house.

It is of great importance for every B.I.A. Specialist to check his Plate Number blocks for plate varieties, so that plate numbers and plate positions may become known. It is requested that all information of this kind be reported to the Committee for the benefit of the other members. "Give and Ye Shall Receive" is a good motto for the U. S. specialist seeking philatelic data.

Your Committee finds that only a few collectors are fully acquainted with the details of stamp manufacture. Die, Transfer Roll, Relief, Layout Lines, Guide Dots, Reentry, Shift, Double Transfer, Broken Relief, etc., are vague terms to many. The B.I.A. slogan of "Know Your Country's Stamps" should incite all members to seek additional information. The Plate Varieties Committee is therefore preparing SEVERAL ILLUSTRATED REPORTS WHEREBY WE HOPE TO MAKE THIS INFORMATION available to all.

DO IT NOW! Send your dollar to the Chairman and make these reports possible.

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

Pittsburgh, 4¢ ord. Sept. 1931
 Portland, Me., 1¢ coil. Mar. 1931
 Portland, Me., 6¢ ord. May, 1931
 Richmond, 4¢ ord. April, 1931
 Rutherford, 1¢ coil. June, 1931
 Saint Louis, 7¢ ord. (B 11) Jan. 1931
 Saint Louis, 1½¢ coil. July, 1931
 Salt Lake City, 2¢ coil. Oct. 1930
 San Francisco, 2¢ coil. April, 1931
 Scranton, 1¢ coil. Oct. 1930
 South Bend, 1½¢ coil (SIDE VIEW)
 April, 1930

Syracuse, 1½¢ coil. April, 1931
 Syracuse, 1½¢ ord. June, 1931
 Toledo, 1½¢ ord. June, 1931
 Toledo, 9¢ ord. June, 1931
 Washington, 4¢ coil. Mar. 1931
 Wilmington, 1½¢ coil. July, 1931
 Worcester, 6¢ ord. April, 1931
 Worcester, 1½¢ ord. June, 1931

PLAYING CARD COILS

E. E. F. Corp. July, 1931

All listed above are standard overprint and current series, unless otherwise noted.

SHIFT HUNTER SERVICE EXPANSION

Fellow B.I.A. Members:

No doubt you have noticed the announcement in a recent number of the SPECIALIST, and also on our page in GOSSIP, that I have been appointed to assist our Publicity Manager to the extent of soliciting subscriptions from local stamp clubs to the SHIFT HUNTER LETTERS.

As many members are no doubt members of local stamp clubs, I want to ask that you cooperate with me in bringing to the attention of your local club members the desirability of receiving these SHIFT HUNTER LETTERS. No serious collector or group of collectors of United States stamps can afford to be without them as they bring to the student a wealth of information not obtainable elsewhere.

All spokes in a wheel must bear their share of the weight if the wheel is to remain true. Help your Association in bringing to the attention of local clubs everywhere the valuable work of the Plate Varieties Committee, whose illustrated reports are an essential requisite to intelligent study and collecting of the stamps of our country.

With this issue of the SPECIALIST, SHL 41, an EDUCATIONAL rotaprint, is being distributed gratis to every member. Exhibit it at your next local club meeting. Explain what the SHIFT HUNTER SERVICE is and point out the value of a subscription for the local club library. It is desired to establish contact with every local club in the country. This is possible and will result in considerable benefit to the local clubs, the B.I.A. and the membership. The greater the number of local club subscriptions the more data and information will be received by The Plate Varieties Committee, resulting in wider distribution of more exhaustive reports, which in turn will extend the influence of the B.I.A. and render its work more effective. The loan of special sets for exhibition purposes and display in local club rooms and public libraries throughout the country may be arranged.

All communications pertaining to SHIFT HUNTER SERVICE publicity, public library exhibition and club subscriptions should be addressed to

LESLIE C. ROY, ELKINS, WEST VIRGINIA.