

BUREAU  
ISSUES  
ASSOCIATION

PLATE  
VARIETIES  
COMMITTEE

# U. S. PLATE VARIETIES

Shift Hunter Letter No. 65

C. W. Bedford

319 Vaniman Street • Akron, Ohio

Commemoratives  
and New Issues  
MAX G. JOHL  
20 W. 37th Street  
New York, N. Y.

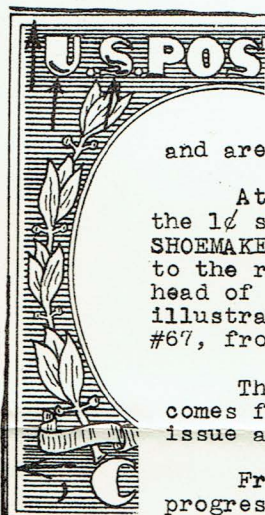
Offset Issues  
DON F. LYBARGER  
422 Engineer's Bldg.  
Cleveland, Ohio

All Other Issues  
C. W. BEDFORD

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



At the upper right is a small drawing by DICK KINDIG of Denver, Colo., showing his discovery of what looks like a retouch on the 2¢ Offset, Type V.



At the left are two illustrations of Doubles in the 5¢ 1917, #504, from JOHN G. KUESPERT. The upper stamp is from a lower row of stamps. The lower stamp shows guide line straight edge at the left. A number of other small Double Transfers have been noted in this stamp and are probably from the same plate.



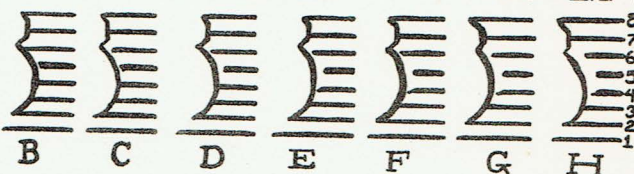
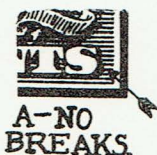
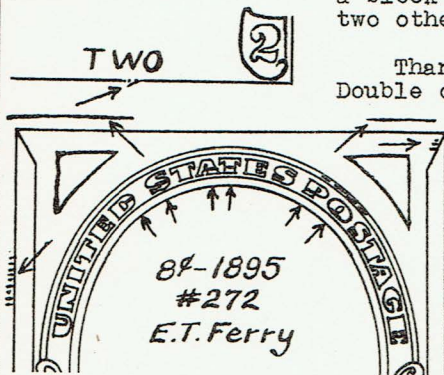
At the right is a fine Double Transfer in the 1¢ sidewise coil of 1923, #597, found by L.D. SHOEMAKER, and showing an extensive displacement to the right in UNITED, OSTAGE and on the forehead of the portrait. (Note: A more complete illustration of this variety was included in SHL #67, from a drawing by BEVERLY KING. LMR )

The big Double Transfer in the 1¢ 1902, #300, comes from HAROLD WAGNER. True Doubles in this issue are scarce and well worth looking for.

From T.J.GRIDLEY comes this RELIEF BREAK in progress on the 2¢ Jamestown. All four stamps of a block of four show it; the start and two other stages. What plate?



Thanks to E.T.FERRY for the nice Double on 8¢ 1895, #272, below at left.



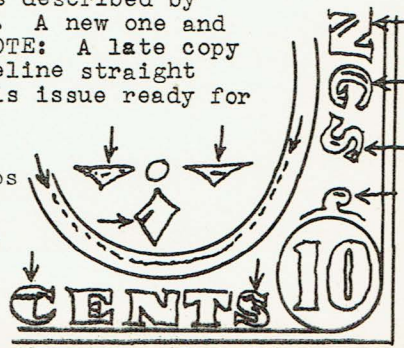
HE drawings for the progressive Relief Break on the 2¢ 1908-10 were made and submitted by DICK KINDIG. Who can give the complete history of this break by plate numbers?



At the lower right is a Double Transfer in the 10¢ Postal Savings Official Mail, #1640, submitted by J. G. KUESPERT. It shows a center-line below.

The 2¢ Hudson-Fulton at the left was described by George B. Sloane and submitted by J.G.KUESPERT. A new one and as yet unlocated as to plate and position. (NOTE: A late copy of this variety in our possession shows a guideline straight edge at left. We have a complete report on this issue ready for release soon, but leave this in in hope of obtaining position data for the final record.)

At the bottom left are the two lower stamps from a booklet pane of #498 from Dr. Gearhart.





# THE SHIFT HUNTERS

1932 Calhoun Street - Seattle, Washington - January 30, 1934

TO ALL COLLECTORS AND STUDENTS OF PLATE VARIETIES:

GREETINGS! For the benefit of those whose interest in this branch of the hobby has only recently been aroused, and those of the "old gang" who may have strayed from the fold during the hectic years just passed, the following resume' of the activities of THE SHIFT HUNTERS is presented:

**HISTORICAL** In 1929, the late Clayton W. Bedford, father of organized plate variety study, sponsored a cooperative group of collectors and students of this specialized class of stamps and personally conducted the "clearing house" thru which all data and discoveries of any of the group were made available to all.

**THE REPORTS** This was made possible thru the medium of reports issued from time to time which he appropriately named "Shift Hunter Letters" after the old-time custom of calling most any plate variety a "Shift". The reports were produced by the "ditto" process in small quantity and covered only a few notes and varieties in each report. As the number of subscribers increased it became necessary to secure a larger number of copies than was possible by ordinary duplicating methods, and also to include more and better illustrations and notes. Accordingly, the "offset" method of photolithographic reproduction was adopted and several hundred copies of each report produced. These printed reports were increased in frequency and the expense partially covered by the charging of a "subscription" fee of \$2.00 per year.

**GROWTH** As the number of subscribers increased from the dozen or so at the beginning to approximately 190 in 1933, the number and quality of the reports was also increased. During this time the group became the Plate Variety Committee of the Bureau Issues Association, for many of the members were also affiliated with the latter organization, and such of its data as applied to Bureau Issues were made available to all members of the Association.

**SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES** The new method of production required more accurate illustration, and this was accomplished by the preparation of blank mats of many of the normal stamp designs. These mats were regularly printed from etched plates made from pen and ink drawings of the designs to be reproduced. For the convenience of the subscribers, these mats were printed in quantity and kept in stock so that they could be obtained by any interested collector at a price very little above actual cost. The continual adding to of this stock of blank mats, together with the centralized records of varieties and data, is of great service to the collectors interested.

**EXPENSES** The original cost of the plates for the mats amounted to several hundred dollars, while the printing and postage bill for the reports amounted to another couple of hundred annually. The latter is paid out of current receipts for subscriptions, with anything over going to retire the cost of present plates or to provide for new ones added to the line. It is obvious that in order to meet even the current expense it is necessary that we have at least 100 subscribers, or more than 200, if any additional service is to be rendered.

**THE PRESENT** With the death of Mr. Bedford last May, publication of the Shift Hunter Letters ceased. While more than half of the subscribers on the mailing list of the Shift Hunters had not paid their 1932-33 subscriptions, it is our understanding that the reports (up to and including letter #63) were



## Plate Varieties Committee

C. W. BEDFORD, Chairman  
319 Vaniman Street, Akron, Ohio

Those who collect Telegraph stamps will find a new interest in them due to the observation of H. M. Jones on the 25¢ blue, Postal Telegraph Co. There are several small doubles on this stamp. One block of ten shows nearly every stamp slightly doubled in one direction or another. The best variety observed is on a single showing the lower frame and the lower part of the shield nicely doubled downward. The old slogan of the Shift Hunters still holds: "Wherever there is a stamp there may be a shift".

**2c Yorktown.** On the right pane (with TOP) of black plate F20657, second plate layout, please check the crossed center line block in the center of the pane. The lower left stamp in this block, with line at top and right, shows the horizontal line back of the bow in the hair of Rochambeau to be nicely doubled.  
Edw. T. Ferry

### 2c Documentary. Spanish War Revenue.

There is a relief break in the colored line under the "C" of CENTS. A sequence of the stages shows the start of the break gradually enlarging as the piece of metal gradually bends upwards until it disfigures the lower part of the "C". Wm. T. Kiepora

**No. 558, 6c 1922** The color between the "TAT" of STATES and the white medalion border is almost entirely missing. If this is a broken relief it is the largest break yet observed. It is possible that this one copy may be due to "flaking" of a bit of line from the surface of the stamp but a high powered glass fails to show any depression.  
H. M. Southgate

**Check S.H.L. 54** The owner of the two anonymous varieties is Lt. Com. E. P. Nicholson, Retired, of Pensacola, Fla.

**3c Stuart coil** The present 3¢ Stuart coil has been found sufficiently off center to show the plate numbers 20946 and 20947 alternately in the upper margin. Pairs showing the plate joint and the number 20946 above the right stamp also show a neat little group of plate CRACKS in the left stamp running nearly vertically through George's collar and through the "GT" of WASHINGTON.  
John L. Koch

**No. 1897. 10c Special Delivery. 1911.** This stamp shows a damaged transfer. Sometime during the latter part of the use of double line watermarked paper the transfer roll started to lose the heavy line defining the top of the design. By the time the single line watermark paper came into use this line has almost completely disappeared. When the attention of the Bureau was called to this discrepancy they made a new transfer roll and subsequent plates show the line complete once more. The earliest plate the writer has seen with the complete line again is number 5860. George C. McNabb. (First reported in the Philadelphia Stamp Club Bulletin for Sept. 1929.)

**No. 498. 1c 1917** Plate F13369 shows a crack extending horizontally across the margin at the top. The crack ends over the second "3" of the plate number and extends from there towards the right. The length of the crack is unknown. George C. McNabb. (Ibid.)

Lt. Com. Nicholson also sends an item that is out of our line of plate varieties but is well worth reporting. It is a cover from Pensacola, Florida to Evergreen, Alabama and is sealed with a "LOCAL OFFICIAL SEAL". It is the first local we have seen in official seals. The legend reads: S. B. Strout, P.M. Officially Sealed. Evergreen, Alabama. The cover is dated Sept. 1, 1902.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing prints some very attractive REVENUE STAMPS for the Philippine Islands and also

for Porto Rico, the top label of the latter reading "The People of Porto Rico". I have just had the pleasure of going over a small lot of these Philippine revenues but failed to find any noteworthy plate varieties. As Bureau Issue Revenues for U.S. Possessions come within the scope of our B.I.A. activities we would like to know something about their plate varieties.

Apparently Hawaii, Canal Zone and Virgin Islands revenues will also be Bureau products and there may have been some for Cuba at one time. Seeking for plate varieties I have had the pleasure of acquiring a considerable number of these revenues of our possessions that I will gladly exchange for others and hope that we may ultimately find out more about them.

The field for Bureau Plate Varieties is far broader than the regular U.S. postage stamps, as our variety collectors are beginning to find out. "Wherever there is a stamp there may be plate varieties" and the term "Bureau Issues" includes far more than straight U.S. postage stamps. We have one collector who is finding Bureau errors on tobacco stamps that are in current use. One collector has reported a U.S. postage variety on a stamp overprinted for one of our possessions. Another is finding some wonderful varieties on early Mexican revenues and although these are not Bureau printed they indicate the possibility of new fields for investigation. How about Bureau printed postage stamps for the Philippines? Their plate numbers? Their varieties?

Beer is here. Early beer stamps shows a wealth of plate data — plate numbers imprints, arrows, plate changes of design and some very fine double transfers. Who shall be the first to find new data and new varieties on the new beer stamps, if there be such? Our ignorance on this subject is enormous. Even the common State Revenue stamps for cigarettes are a possibility. We usually throw them away without looking at them. Have you ever noted whether they are engraved, lithographed or what?

## Committee On Commemoratives - New Issues

MAX G. JOHL, Chairman  
20 W. 37th Street, New York City

**CORRECTION.** In the May report of this committee a variety of a Bi-Centennial was reported as occurring on plate #20865. Change this to read #20685.

George R. M. Ewing has checked Oglethorpe 210960 L #4 reported in the May Specialist and finds that the "Dot in lower loop of the first '3' in '1933' is not constant.

Jack Smith reports that his post office has a book of 13¢ flat plate stamps of the current issue that are badly smudged on part of each sheet. He has kindly offered to obtain copies for B.I.A. members at face. If interested, write to him direct at 308 Mankato Street, Austin, Minn.

**1¢ BI-CENTENNIAL CRACKED PLATE.** Beverly S. King has reported in STAMPS that the cracks recently reported in the UL pane of plate 20742 are also in the top strip of the upper right pane. These cracks are only to be found in the late printings.

**3¢ 1932 ORDINARY.** George R. M. Ewing reports locating, through the assistance and courtesy of Mr. Lester S. Morris of Brooklyn, N.Y., the two upper horizontal rows of 20889 UL on which the following varieties are strongly marked:-

4-5 ... Two parallel horizontal cracks running from the "TA" of "POSTAGE" on #4 across the margin and into the inner frame line of #5 opposite the "T" of "UNITED".

7-8 ... Two horizontal cracks starting

in the white curved line under "ST" of "POSTAGE" on #7 and continuous across margin and ending in the white curved line under "TE" of "UNITED" on #8.

10 ... Series of diagonal (nearly horizontal) cracks in sheet gutter opposite "TA" of "POSTAGE" and extending from edge of stamp to edge of sheet.

Mr. Morris reports having a similar block of 20888 U.L. that has plate cracks in the same locations as the above.

Mr. Ewing further reports that he was informed that these plates had been used and distributed around June of 1932, when they were re-chromed and stored. So it is decidedly worth while searching for them.

**3¢ 1932 COILS.** Numerous plate cracks have been reported on stamps to the right of the joint line. There are three distinct cracks, one starting near the top of the stamp and running down to the nose, another stamp shows a crack starting at the nose and running down to the "S" of "WASHING-

TON", and on a third stamp there are two cracks running from the chin down into the lower frame design. These all seem to be curving cracks.

**3¢ NEWBURGH** The only plate variety reported on this stamp to date comes from Frank D. Halsey #21121 UR #93 Stain in the "C" of "CENTS" and in the margin below the stamp.

## Committee On Bureau Issues Plate Varieties

GREETINGS TO MY

FELLOW MEMBERS!

The first order of business in this initial report of the new committee is to call attention to the correct address of the Chairman, so that correspondence will be expedited. A former address and also an incorrect address was given in the April and May numbers of the SPECIALIST.

As was called to your attention in the March issue, report of the Plate Variety Committee by C. W. Bedford, your Chairman has a great ambition to accumulate complete plate variety information for all Bureau Issues, and to permanently record this information on 3x5 printed illustrating mats for future benefit of our membership and Philately as a whole. Your cooperation is requested to the extent that you submit every major plate variety of which the position is known for illustration and record, giving if possible the name of the discoverer and record of previous reports of the variety which have appeared in the philatelic press.

In addition to the illustrated record, a pane record will be maintained for every plate, showing the location of all known varieties thereon, including such distinguishing marks as "double strikes" and other abnormalities which are of importance in replating studies and similar analyses. All specimens showing such oddities which have been definitely located should also be submitted for record.

We already have a number of important discoveries to report, but we will withhold these until our next report. It is desired that "you-all" out there let your now Chairman hear from you as soon as possible, so that we can make the work of this committee of the greatest value to all concerned and an example of the sort of splendid cooperation that has made this Association what it is!

Come one, come all! Give me the benefit of what YOU know, and I'll make the combined knowledge available to all! Awaiting with enthusiasm a deluge of data, and promising big news next month, I'm cordially yours,  
L. M. RYER, Chairman  
1932 E. Calhoun St.  
Seattle, Washington