



The United States **SPECIALIST**

for the Collector of Postage & Revenue Stamp Issues of the United States

WHOLE NUMBER 1120

The Monthly Random Booklet A Look at the Littlefield Vol. I Book

— plus —



Origins of the Transports' Triple Rudder

— and —

1¢ Navy Stamp of the Army-Navy Series & A New Tagging Discovery

VOLUME 94, NUMBER 6

JUNE 2023



United States Possessions: Postage Due Stamps and Covers presents the story of Postage Due stamps used in the major possessions or territories of the United States. Written from a stamp collector's perspective, the authors address the challenge of identifying the myriad of Possession Postage Due stamps by concentrating on stamp identification while also covering the Postage Due issues of Cuba, the Danish West Indies, Puerto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone, the Philippines and more.

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the journal of the United States Stamp Society

VOLUME 94, NUMBER 6

JUNE 2023

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An association of collectors to promote the study of all postage and revenue stamps and stamped paper of the United States and US-administered areas produced by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and other contract printers.

American Philatelic Society Affiliate No. 150

Prologue

242 Leadership & Committees

244 Society News

246 Awards Report

by Denise Stotts

262 Vintage Photo of the Month

by Rodney A. Juell



Features

**247 Large Block Tagging on CAPEX
Souvenir Sheet**

by Scott Adams

**248 The Monthly Random Booklet: A Look at
the Littlefield Vol. I Book**

by Dieter R. Kohler, Ph.D.

264 Origins of the Transports' Triple Rudder
by Joseph Skidmore

269 The 1¢ Navy Stamp of the Army-Navy Series
by Paul M. Holland

**277 "Accounted For" Markings on the
Washington-Franklin Heads**
by Andrew S. Kelley



Epilogue

286 Plate Number Report

by Kim D. Johnson

288 Executive Secretary's Report

by Rodney A. Juell

C3 Classified Advertising

C3 Index of Advertisers

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Society News

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The Society wishes to congratulate the following loyal members who have attained milestone anniversaries during 2023:

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USSS Members can log into the society's website (www.usstamps.org) and download the digital version of **THE TRANSPORTS** by G. H. Davis

This thorough study of the 1941-44 Transport Airmail stamp issue is now available in the RESOURCES section of the website. Explore the publications section for this and other valuable resources.

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If you are a member of one of these anniversary groups, we would like to give you your pin at our 2023 Annual Meeting, which was to have been held at NOJEX in October. However, within the past two weeks we have learned that NOJEX has been canceled. We are looking for an alternate show and will keep you advised.

Again, thanks for your loyal support of the United States Stamp Society.

— Nick Lombardi, President

Precancel Stamp Society



Interested in Learning More about Precancels? Request a copy of "The ABCs of Precancel Collecting" and also receive a sample copy of the PSS Forum, the Precancel Stamp Society's monthly journal. Contact: Frank Bird III, 1095 Pinellas Point Dr South, Apt 352, St. Petersburg, FL 33705-6377. Email: promo@precancels.com.

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Recent Winners of USSS Medals

Here are the United States Stamp Society medal winners that have been reported from recent shows:

Statue of Freedom Awards (WSP Shows)

Show	Winner	Exhibit
CHICAGOPEX (IL)	Gregory Shoults	<i>Washington & Franklin Coils Flat Plate and Coil Waste Issues 1908-1915</i>
Florex (FL)	Vernon Morris	<i>Evolution and Impact of Bloods Local Post 1842-1862</i>
Sarasota NSE (FL)	Jon Krupnik	<i>Aloha – The 80¢ Diamond Head Stamp of 1920</i>
SESE (GA)	Nicholas Lombardi	<i>Washington Shield Issue</i>
GP March Party (OH)	Andrew Kelley	<i>The Offset Lithographed Washington-Franklin Heads</i>
St. Louis SE (MO)	Anthony Dewey	<i>The U.S. Alphabet-Denominated Rate-Change Series, 1978-1998</i>



Figure 1. Toney Dewey won the USSS Statue of Freedom medal at St. Louis Stamp Expo.



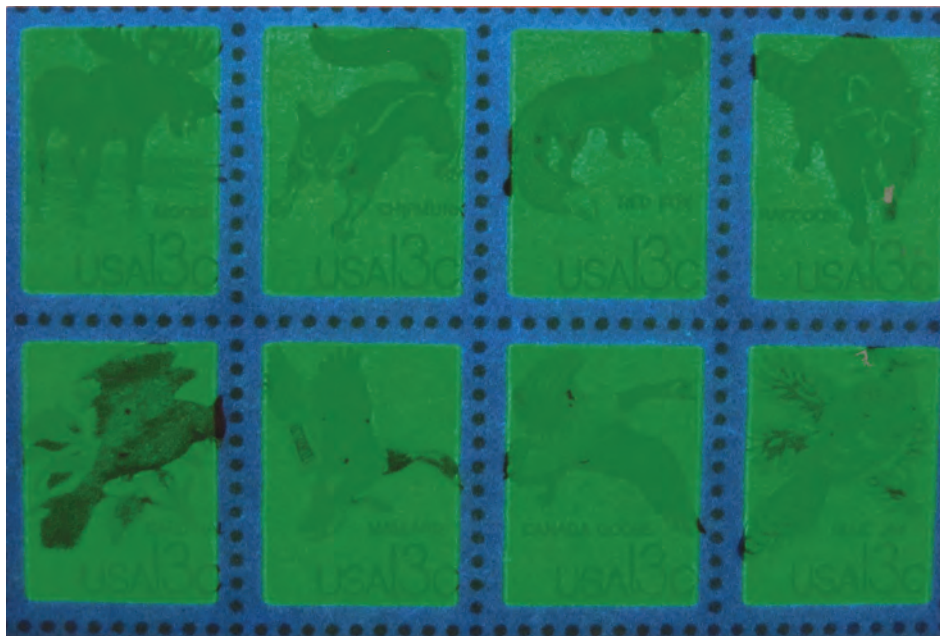
Figure 2. Andrew Kelley, right receiving the USSS Statue of Freedom Award from Awards Chairman Ray Beer at the Garfield-Perry March Party.

President’s Award (Local and Regional Shows)

Show	Winner	Exhibit
Mid-Cities SE (TX)	Stanley Christmas	<i>The Life Cycle of the 4 ½ Cent White House Stamp</i>
Nashville S & PC (TN)	Mathias Benward	<i>Guam Guard Mail</i>

Show Awards Chairs, please note: The USSS Gold Statue of Freedom Medal is sent automatically to all APS World Series of Philately shows. The USSS Silver President’s Award medal is available upon request to all local and regional shows.

For more information, to request an award or if you have won a USSS award and have not seen it listed in *The U.S. Specialist*, please write to Denise Stotts, P.O. Box 690042, Houston, TX 77269-0042, or e-mail stottsjd@swbell.net.



Large Block Tagging on CAPEX Souvenir Sheet

by **Scott Adams** | Malta, New York

submitted by **Rob Loeffler**

USSS #14421 | Pequannock, New Jersey.

The purpose of this report is to identify a previously unknown tagging variety on Scott 1757, the CAPEX souvenir sheet. Currently, the souvenir sheet is only cataloged with small block tagging, approximately 20 mm in height by 14.5 mm in width.

Photographic evidence of a larger block tag version measuring 21mm by 16 mm is presented here. The plate number is 38638, which exhibits both types (sizes) of tagging. The tagging blocks show no signs of tagging plate wear or excess pressure as the plates applied the taggant. All edges and corners of the tagging blocks are straight, with sharp 990-degree angles. There is no evidence of bulging or voids that can affect the block dimensions.

The staff at Scott is currently verifying this new find.

Warm up your shortwave light and start checking for more examples that have been hiding in plain sight for the last 45 years.



from the Booklets & Booklet Panes Committee

The Monthly Random Booklet A Look at the Littlefield Vol. I Book

by **Dieter R. Kohler, Ph.D.**

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Introduction

In 2004, the ultimate book for booklet specialists was issued by the United States Stamp Society, *U.S. Booklets and Booklet Panes, 1900-1978*.¹ It encompasses all the regular flat plate issues. Written by Donald B. Littlefield and Sam Franks, it covers the area with the greatest possible detail. Also, it includes long lists of plate varieties for every issue, almost all described as seen by eye inspection in the heydays of stamp collecting (no computers, no scanners, just drawings by hand). Much time has passed since its publication, and some specialists might have added a small note or a correction here and there over time. This article identifies several issues and checks the reported varieties' veracity and completeness (or lack thereof).

Hunting for plate varieties was a relatively common sport in the early years of booklets, up into the 1970s when Loran C French started a long-running series of articles in this journal.² The enthusiasm, if one might call it that, has almost entirely died down since. This is not a surprise, as the 1¢ and 2¢ Washington-Franklin flat plate booklet panes, once available around face value, now often value in the high two to low three digits range. It is doubtful someone ever again will buy piles of booklet panes to check through them for plate varieties. More likely EFOs (errors, freaks and oddities) are now the thing to talk about.

The Samples

In two 2022 Kelleher auctions, several spectacular booklet lots were offered. While the author longed for some particular lots of Provisional NY-area booklets, which hardly ever show up at auctions or dealer stocks, he was severely outbid on those. There were other items up for grabs, though, including lots of booklet accumulations of particular issues which "might fly under the radar." A few pieces of some of those lots will show or have already shown up in this article series. Lots that might go at reasonable (and did eventually) were collections of Scott 498e/499e panes and Scott 501b/502b panes comprising almost complete sets of all possible plate number panes. This was an opportunity for the author to test the correctness and completeness of the Littlefield book, at least as far as plate number pane varieties are concerned for those issues. It also allows for seeing what people described in the early years of plate variety hunting and what can

be seen using high-resolution scans.

A calibrated Epson Perfection V600 Photo scanner was used at 2400 dpi. This resolution is slightly higher than the actual physical resolution of the CCD chip in this scanner model, so any higher resolution would not reveal more data. However, such a high resolution is necessary for detecting the more obscure plate varieties.



Figure 1. A siderographer at work (Image courtesy Smithsonian Institution, National Postal Museum).

Figure 1 shows a siderographer positioning the die transfer roller. The lamp in the right front of the image would shine light almost parallel onto the plate, making the faint dots, arcs, and lines easily detectable on the polished soft steel plate. A plate finisher removed those faint marks at the end unless they became part of the design by clever placement. Occasionally, a plate finisher would overlook some of the marks, and they show up as faint lines and dots of ink where there should be nothing on the printed stamp sheets.

- **Double transfers and shifts** – Sometimes, the siderographer had to reenter a stamp or only a part of a stamp due to a repair or other reasons. If the old impression was not completely removed, certain bits of the original stamp might still appear if the new impression was not precisely above the old one.
- **Constant gouges and cracks** – These may happen if a plate is damaged during the printing operation or the siderographer “worked too fast.” Each stamp image was entered onto the plate in multiple passes. The job was to impress holes and grooves into the plate. Note there is no plate steel being removed (unlike engraving the master die where the engraver scratched away the soft steel where needed for holes and grooves). The only way to make grooves was to either compress or dislodge some soft steel to the sides, creating tiny bulges (which were also removed by the plate finishers in the final step). If a stamp was impressed with one swift impression, the plate steel would in-

What is a Plate Variety?

First, plate varieties do not include miscut, misperforated, paper fold-overs, under- or over-linked panes, or anything that is not directly related to the steel on the printing plate. It is all about those little things general collectors overlook, but for which specialists have been searching, given enough time, experience and good equipment. Each particular variety could merit its own article, but we will keep it short for this one.

- **Layout dots, arcs, and lines** – Whenever a siderographer was making a new plate, the first thing he did was place faint dots, lines and arcs onto the virgin plate. These marks helped place the die transfer roller above the correct place before impressing a stamp image into the plate.

evitably suffer micro cracks. So the die transfer roller was rocked repeatedly over the stamp position (turning the big wheel in Figure 1 allowed for high torques), slowly increasing the pressure each time. If, by chance, the transfer roller or the plate shifted by a tiny amount when the pressure was increased too much, the final design could show a shift or even a double transfer.

- **Relief breaks** – these happen when tiny bits of steel break off. This could happen to the die on the transfer roller when it was pressed into a printing plate to make the 180 or 360 stamp impressions per plate. It could also happen to the printing plate during stamp production due to the high pressures applied by the press.

Theoretically, a relief break could also happen on the master die and pass unnoticed. However, since all stamps on the plate(s) would end up with this feature, it is often called a constant plate variety.

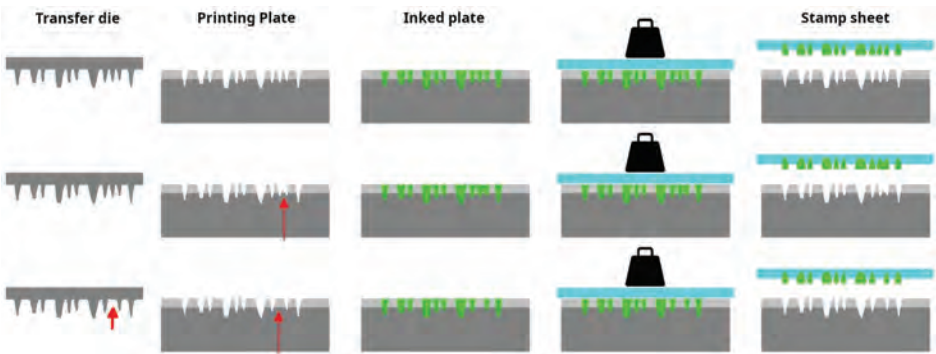


Figure 2. Printing stages for flat plate sheets, from left to right. The top row shows no relief break, the middle row shows relief break on the plate, and the bottom row displays a relief break on the transfer die.

Figure 2 shows the three possible printing paths using green ink for visualization. A small section of the transfer die is shown at left (as a flat segment). The red arrows point to the places where a tiny piece of steel would break off, either on the plate (middle row) or on the transfer die (bottom row).

- **Top row** – On an undamaged plate, all the ink (drawn in green in Figure 2) from all the grooves transfers onto the paper (drawn in blue).
- **Middle row** – When a piece of steel breaks off the printing plate, a wider groove forms, which results in additional ink deposited and transferred onto the paper. So a relief break in the plate leads to additional ink in all successive stamps. What happens with the piece of steel is anyone's guess. It could wander around, damaging the plate at other places; it could get stuck in a groove or be removed at the next plate wiping cycle, possibly randomly scratching the plate surface.
- **Bottom row** – When a piece of steel breaks off the transfer die, a groove disappears from the plate, which results in no ink being transferred at that place. So a relief break on the transfer roller leads to missing ink in all successive

stamps. Once a transfer roller is damaged, the damaged area appears on all further stamps on the plate. Again, what happens with the lost piece of steel is anyone's guess.

Over the decades, several researchers have attempted to classify relief breaks by some chosen personal criteria. A fundamental problem is the classification of an effect that is random and could progressively develop over time. Most specialists now refer to the classification done by R. H. Jones,³ which is an extended sum total of previous classification attempts.

The Problem of Plate Wear

One of the missing factors in older discussions about relief breaks is the influence of plate wear. It is an effect that can always throw a wrench into the picture. This is shown in Figure 2 by the light gray part of the steel plate. This is part of the plate that wears off over time (particularly fast if the wiping cloths were too rough or the ink contained abrasive minerals) and leads to less ink in the grooves as they become shallower and shallower over time; mimicking die transfer roller relief breaks.

This is a significant effect to consider. As the plate surface slowly erodes, areas where the grooves were originally shallow would eventually disappear entirely. Shallow grooves significantly increase the chance of ink scooping (random specks of lost ink in the design). Also, sharp edges of lines become fuzzier over time as additional ink is deposited in eroded edges on the plate.



Figure 3. Eroded plate at top, fresh plate on the bottom.

The effects of plate wear are shown in Figure 3. The booklet stamp on the top is from a worn-down plate. Almost all lines are fuzzy, with ink along what should be sharp edges leaking into uninked areas. Random areas of no ink (for example, in the “G” of “POSTAGE”) can be seen. This is particularly a problem at the ends of engraved lines, where grooves tend to be slightly shallower from the start. Hence plate wear could create the same effects as a relief break on the transfer dies.

The first victims of plate wear are the residual layout marks. These are inherently very shallow grooves and dots by intent. These marks may still show faint ink-less impressions on the stamps as the ink is scooped out of the shallow depressions but will completely disappear as plate wear continues.

So to summarize, the equation “Missing ink = Die transfer relief break, Additional ink = Printing plate relief break” may not be true as additional factors come into play:

- Overinking or bad plate wiping on an undamaged plate can lead to additional ink on the stamp.
- Underinking or scooping the ink off an undamaged plate can lead to missing ink on the stamp. Scooping of ink happens when the wiping cloths used to clean the plate surface suck up some ink, particularly from shallow or extended areas of ink, like wide lines.
- A printing plate always wears down during its use. Plate wear causes lines to become fuzzier over time, and inked areas become underinked or devoid of ink due to shallower grooves.
- Tiny pieces of plate steel broken or rubbed off might be pinched in the edges of grooves and accumulate there over time. This reduces groove depth locally and could cause missing ink. This would create an “inverse plate relief break” effect; ink no longer exists where it should be present.
- If a plate relief break forms a too-wide groove, then plate wiping cloths (intended to remove excess ink on the top of the plate) might partially suck ink out of the groove (called ink scooping), leading to missing ink, again mimicking a die transfer relief break.

Ultimately, determining whether missing ink is a relief break or a plate wear effect is often difficult and may be subject to personal opinion. Generally, a relief break is usually a sudden event, while plate wear is a gradual event. The original descriptions of the plate number panes 11761, 11762, 11763, and 11768 (which were at the press at the same time) in the Littlefield book read:

Pos. D, pl. #11761, stamp # unknown, “I” break (Fig. 39), one or more relief breaks in short horizontal shading lines #42-50 near the left frame opposite Washington’s nose. F-73, DBL.

Pos. D, pl. #11768, stamp # unknown, “I” break (Fig. 39), one or more relief breaks in short horizontal shading lines #42-50 near the left frame opposite Washington’s nose. F-73.

Plates #11762 and #11763 also mention the “I” breaks.

Figure 4 shows Littlefield’s Figure 39 which stems from an earlier report by Fred

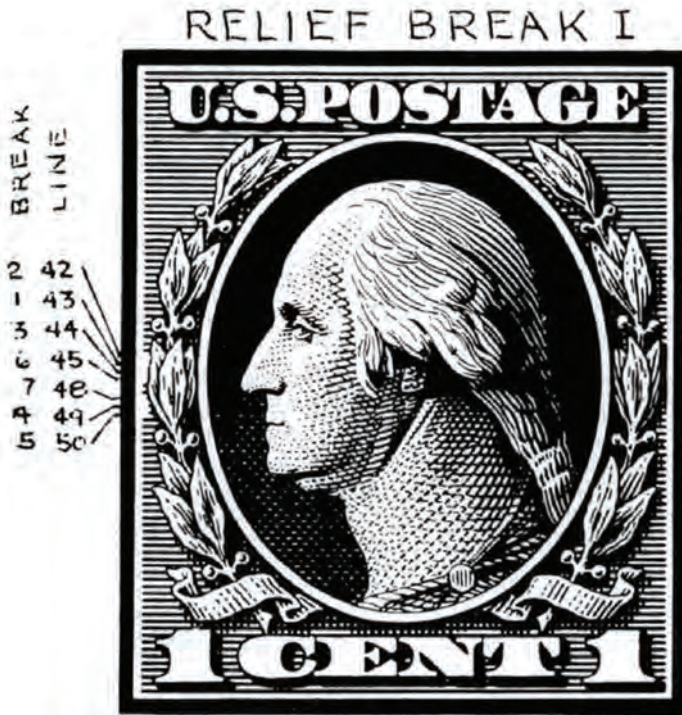


Figure 4. Littlefield's Figure 39, showing "I-7" breaks.

A. Neill,⁴ who reported the seven relief breaks on his examined pane. Likely not all the breaks were seen by Don Littlefield, hence the more cautious "one or more" in the book.

The two top rows in Figure 5 show the left frame areas of stamps 1 and 6 of plate 11761 (plates 11762 and 11763 are no different). The two bottom rows in Figure 5 show the left frame areas of stamps 1 and 6 of plate 11768. Plates 11761, 11762, and 11763 were certified in late September 1920, and plate 11768 was certified on October 6, 1920. All were on the same four-plate power press together for two press runs. The number of impressions was not recorded at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

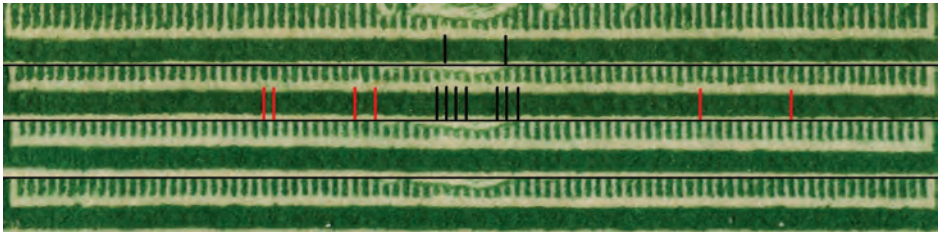


Figure 5. Left frame line areas. Top two rows: plate 11761, stamps 1 and 6. Bottom two rows: plate 11768, stamps 1 and 6.

All four examined plate number panes show some plate wear, so the plates were not in their early stages when these panes were printed. If we assume the siderographer worked from top to bottom on a fresh plate, then stamp 6 on each booklet pane was transferred after stamp 1.

Black lines in the first row point to shading lines 43 and 49, and the lines in the second row point to shading lines 42 to 45 and 48 to 50. None of the lines look even close to the relief breaks, as reported by Fred Neill in Littlefield Figure 39. The two bottom rows from plate 11768, engraved after the other three plates, look identical to stamp 6 of plate 11761. So we can conclude there was no significant degradation of the transfer die from plate 11761 to 11768.

The red lines in row 2 point to some shading lines in stamp 6 of plate 11761 that are a little shorter than on stamp 1, and very similar to the shortening of the shading lines noted by the black lines. However, these red shading lines are not shortened on stamps 1 and 6 of the later plate 11768. So as a first conclusion, the shading lines noted in red are not relief breaks. The missing ink indicated by the black and red lines is most likely ink scooping from areas where plate wear on the plates locally decreased the depth of the grooves.

So the cautious conclusion is that these two panes show no relief breaks, just plate wear effects. What we do not know is the state of the actual pane Fred Neill inspected when he saw the clear relief breaks he noted in Littlefield Figure 39. If he had a pane from a very late printing date and no early printed panes, shading lines 42 to 50 might have shown the effect of relief breaks. But since we have seen that the transfer die did not deteriorate between plate 11761 and 11768, he might actually have seen the effect of excessive plate wear.

Many of the over 250 plate number panes the author has examined showed shading lines, as noted by the red lines in Figure 5. They should probably consider plate wear effects.

Results for Scott 498e

Of the 73 plates used to print Scott 498e panes, 44 have varieties listed in the Littlefield book (Table 1). The descriptions in the book have been compared to high-resolution scanner images.

Of the 29 plates not mentioned in the book, the overwhelming majority contain plate varieties, sometimes detectable by the naked eye. Table 2 shows the list of the plate numbers.

Results for Scott 499e

Of the 100 plates used to print Scott 499e panes, only 11 have varieties listed. That is somewhat surprising since this issue has always been one of the “cheapest” to collect. Table 3 shows how poorly the descriptions compare to checks using high-resolution scans. Usually, only the most easily detectable variety is listed in the book.

Of the 89 plates not mentioned in the book, the overwhelming majority contain plate varieties, sometimes detectable by the naked eye. Table 4 shows the list of the plate numbers.

Generally, a “No” in Tables 1 to 4 above does not necessarily mean there are no plate flaws on these panes. It means the examined panes do not contain flaws, but it is impossible to know if plate flaws developed in later print runs. Nor is it possible to know if the plate flaws on the panes marked with a “Yes” existed right from the start.

Table 1. Scott 498e Plate Number Panes with Varieties in Littlefield
(*see Figure 5)

Plate	Correctly described?	Plate	Correctly described?
7277	(No example)	11756	Incomplete
7484	Incomplete	11757	Incomplete
7791	(No example)	11761	Problematic*, Incomplete
7980	Partly incorrect (bad wording)	11762	Problematic*, incomplete
7981	Incomplete	11763	Problematic*, Incomplete
7990	Yes	11768	Problematic*, Incomplete
8184	Incomplete	13268	Incomplete
8185	(No example)	13269	Incomplete
8186	Not seen on sample	13270	Incomplete
8188	(No example)	13271	Incomplete
8189	Incomplete	13421	False, Incomplete
8947	Incomplete	13422	False, Incomplete
9177	Incomplete	13423	False, Incomplete
9178	Incomplete	13424	False, Incomplete
9179	Yes, but imprecise	13429	False, Incomplete
9180	Yes, but imprecise	13430	False, Incomplete
10080	Almost correct	13431	False, Incomplete
10251	Almost correct, incomplete	13432	False, Incomplete
10252	Incomplete	13459	False, Incomplete
10253	Incomplete	13460	False, Incomplete
10431	False, Incomplete	13461	False, Incomplete
10715	Incomplete	13462	False, Incomplete

Table 2. Scott 498e Plate Number Panes Not Mentioned in Littlefield

Plate	Has variety?	Plate	Has variety?	Plate	Has variety?
6885	(No example)	7991	Yes	10250	No
7179	Yes	8183	Yes	10430	No
7275	Yes	8187	Yes	10432	Yes
7278	Yes	8194	No	10433	Yes
7449	(No example)	8945	Yes	10714	Yes
7474	(No example)	8946	Yes	10716	Yes
7480	(No example)	8948	Yes	10717	Yes
7785	(No example)	10077	Yes	11758	Yes
7786	(No example)	10078	No	11759	Yes
7880	(No example)	10079	No		

Table 3. 499e Plate Number Panes with Varieties Mentioned in Littlefield

**Unclear: scanned panes likely show plate wear effects only.*

Plate	Correctly described?	Plate	Correctly described?
7887	Incomplete	7887	Incomplete
10218	Incomplete	10218	Incomplete
10220	Largely incomplete	10220	Largely incomplete
10407	Incorrect, incomplete	10407	Incorrect, incomplete
10793	Largely Incomplete	10793	Largely Incomplete
11777	Incomplete, Unclear*	11777	Incomplete, Unclear*

Table 4. 499e Plate Number Panes Not Mentioned in Littlefield

Plate	Has variety?	Plate	Has variety?	Plate	Has variety?
7881	Yes	10405	Yes	12490	Yes
7882	Yes	10406	Yes	12930	Yes
7885	Yes	10609	No	12931	No
7968	No	10610	No	12932	Yes
7969	Possibly yes	10611	Yes	12933	Yes
7970	Yes	10612	Yes	12934	Yes
7971	Yes	10672	Yes	12935	Yes
8191	Yes	10673	Yes	12936	Yes
8893	Yes	10674	No	12937	Yes
8894	Yes	10675	Yes	13010	Yes
8895	Yes	10718	Yes	13011	Yes
9471	Yes	10719	Yes	13012	Yes
9472	Yes	10720	Yes	13013	Yes
9473	Yes	10721	Yes	13210	Yes
9474	No	10775	(No example)	13211	Yes
10147	Yes	10776	Yes	13212	Yes
10148	Yes	10777	Yes	12313	Yes
10149	Yes	10778	Yes	13528	Yes
10150	No	10791	Yes	13529	Yes
10219	Yes	10792	Yes	13530	Yes
10221	Yes	10794	Yes	13531	No
10329	Yes	11779	No	13617	Yes
10330	Yes	11780	Yes	13618	Yes
10331	Yes	11781	Yes	13619	Yes
10332	Yes	11782	Yes	13620	Yes
10400	No	11783	Yes	13621	Yes
10401	Yes	11784	Yes	13622	Yes
10402	No	12487	Yes	13623	Yes
10403	No	12488	Yes	13624	No
10404	Yes	12489	Yes		

Results for Scott 501b and 502b

These panes were issued during World War I when German ink was no longer available. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing used its own series of inks, which initially proved very abrasive to the plates. Only four plates were used for Scott 501b, then new dies were made for Scott 502b, which saw some improvements in plate duration, partly due to heavier engraved design lines and improving ink quality.

Of the 16 plates used to print Scott 501b/502b panes, only 2 have varieties listed in the Littlefield book. Plates 8095-8098 are type I, Scott 501b. Of the 14 panes not mentioned, more than half show varieties.

Table 5. Scott 501b/502b Plate Number Panes with Varieties Mentioned in Littlefield

Plate	Correctly described?
8098	Yes
8333	Yes

Table 6. Scott 501b/502b Plate Number Panes Not Mentioned in Littlefield

Plate	Has variety?	Plate	Has variety?
8095	Yes	8449	Yes
8096	Yes	8452	Yes
8097	Yes	8460	No
8331	(No example)	9129	Yes
8332	Yes	9130	No
8334	Yes	9137	No
8448	No	9138	Yes

An interesting observation was that the “usual” layout dots and layout lines seen on the other issues, particularly around the plate numbers, were not present on Scott 501b and 502b. However, fast plate wear due to the abrasive inks might have quickly erased those layout dots and lines near the plate numbers and stamp frames often visible on other issues.

Conclusions

When looking at the tables, a few conclusions are relatively easy to draw:

- Looking at scans of 2400dpi images on a large monitor is much more comfortable than staring through a magnifying glass.
- The varieties listed in the book are largely incomplete, surprisingly even for the “cheap” panes.
- Many of the varieties in the book are incomplete or imprecise; fortunately, very few are plain wrong.

The last two points should not be considered a critique of the early reporters. It simply shows the great advantage of having modern tools at one's disposal. It also helps to have a large sample size to better differentiate between random inking events and true plate varieties.

What could have gone wrong?

One of the problems in the early days certainly was that scanners were unavailable. These modern devices provide significant assistance when looking at tiny effects. Many reporters only had a limited supply of samples to check, so they might have mistaken random ink splashes for layout dots and random ink flakes or plate erosion features for relief breaks. Many reports also lacked detail; fortunately, very few reports seem simply incorrect. The big help is having multiple plate number panes from the same siderographer, as they often had a "personal signature" of layout marks on their plates. So if the same marks appear on several panes from different plates (at logical places), this is a sure sign of genuine layout marks and not random ink splots.

As an example, the original description of a plate number 13424 pane in the Littlefield book reads:

Pos. D. pl. #13424, plate number has horizontal layout line under all plate numerals and layout dot between "3" and "4". Also, stamp # unknown, "P-1" break (Fig. 42), relief break in short horizontal shading line #68 near left frame line. (Figure 42). F-84, DBL.

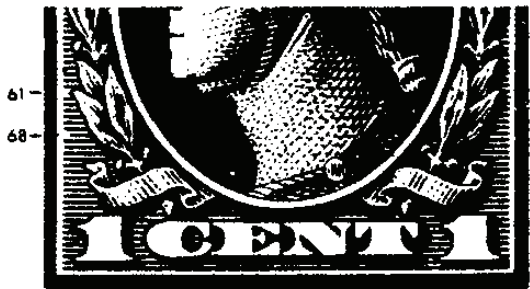


Figure 6. Littlefield's Figure 42, showing "P-1" breaks.

(The number 68 corresponds to the 68th green shading background line, counting from the top of the stamp design).

Figure 7 gives us a possible clue what could have gone wrong with reporting plates 13421 to 13462. Shown is a plate number 13424 pane which would typically not pass a collector's quality control due to being badly miscut. It shows a piece of the position A pane to the right and reveals a clue on the visible bits on the left frame areas of the position A pane.

Three left frame areas are shown greatly enlarged:

At top: Frame area of stamps #2, 4 or 6 of the plate number pane (all look the same).

Middle: Frame area of stamp #1 of what would be the adjacent position A stamp.

Bottom: Frame area of stamp #3 of what would be the adjacent position A stamp.

What can be seen is that there are absolutely no relief breaks on the plate number 13424 pane. On stamp #1 of what would be the adjacent position A pane, there is a clear relief break on line 68. On stamp #3 of the adjacent pane, we can tentatively see additional relief breaks near the top of the stamp. Unfortunately, the margin is too small to see any breaks past the first 30 lines on stamp 3.

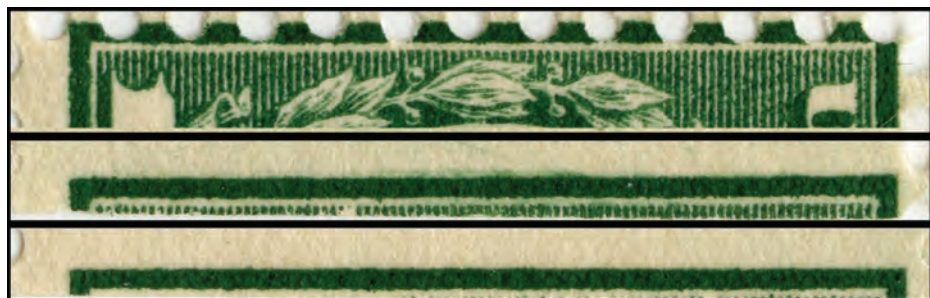


Figure 7. Top: Scott 498e miscut pane from plate 13424. Bottom: Three enlarged left stamp frames.

So we see that the relief breaks exist on the examined plate 13424 panes but belong to the adjacent position A pane at right. The relief breaks on the transfer die happened instantly and did not gradually evolve, as the adjacent pane was transferred immediately after the plate number pane. Once a piece of steel breaks off the transfer die and creates a relief break, it never returns, so all succeeding impressions from the transfer roller onto the plate contain (at least) this relief break.

This surprisingly tells us a little more about the siderographer. As the plate number pane does not contain any relief breaks, but the pane right next to it does, it follows that the stamp impressions on the plates were most likely done from top right to bottom left, as the printing plate layout is a mirror image of the printed stamp sheet. Also, as more relief breaks developed on the position A pane from stamp 1 to stamp 3, the plate was engraved from top to bottom (row 1 first, row 2 second, and row 3 last on the booklet panes).

It likely happened here that Loran French got an unfortunately imprecise report from a collector with a similar miscut pane (or even this same pane), stating that their plate number 13424 pane had “P-1” relief breaks on some stamps. Lacking a pane of his

own to cross-check, the book editors added the variety into their database as reported. As there are smaller things wrong, the new entry now reads:

D13424.1: Horizontal layout line through the base of the plate number. Layout dot at the bottom of digit “4”. Faint vertical layout line through “S” of U.S. and showing in the horizontal gutter above stamp #5. (Figure 436).

The Comparison

Table 7 compares the varieties listed in French’s original book,⁵ in the Littlefield book, and in an expanded draft of the Littlefield book (by the author). It shows there are hundreds of new varieties, and there are likely hundreds more yet to be found and reported.

Table 7. Number of Currently Reported Flat Plate Varieties

Pane	French	Littlefield	Updated Littlefield
279Be	0	2	20
300b	2	4	15
301c	0	1	8
319vars	3	9	43
331a	1	3	7
332a	5	14	299
374a	1	4	11
375a	4	9	20
405b	2	5	17
406a	1	6	13
424d	24	55	68
425e	3	5	11
462a	20	28	31
463a	0	1	5
498e	113	335	361
498f	0	10	10
499e	24	27	104
499f	0	0	0
501b	8	8	15
502b	3	4	26
552a	7	10	27
554c	11	19	41
C10a	20	Not in book	18
All	252	559	900

The author would like to hear from collectors about the varieties they detected that are not listed in the Littlefield book (particularly the new owners of the other Kelleher lots of other plate number pane collections). Though there is little hope of ever getting a complete report of plate varieties, many varieties are undoubtedly unreported in collections containing the “cheaper” panes. It is unlikely we’ll ever see extensive lists for more expensive items like the AEF panes for obvious reasons.

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In 1937 a fair was held in Dallas, Texas, known as the “Greater Texas and Pan American Exposition.” It was a carryover from, and a “re-branding” of, the “Texas Centennial” held the previous year on the same site. This month’s photo shows Postmaster General James A. Farley in Dallas, holding the official seal of the exposition, which was used to cachet mail sent on the opening day of the exposition, June 12. Also pictured is George Marshall, entertainment and sports director for the fair.

Shown to the right is a cover from the opening day of the fair, cacheted with the official logo and postmarked at the exposition station. Although the cover is marked “First Day Cover,” June 12 was the first day of the exposition, not the first day of the stamp, which had been issued the previous year.





Postal History



Origins of the Transports' Triple Rudder

by **Joseph Skidmore**
USSS #16066 | Sedona, AZ

The Douglas DC-4 has been noted as the model of the Transports' triple rudder.¹ What is not clear from the philatelic record is that the model was the DC-4E (Figure 1),² the single prototype of a large 4-engine transport envisioned by US airlines. The commercial DC-4 did not emerge until after WW II and differed in many details from the DC-4E, including the triple rudder tail. This confusion stems from the E (for Experimental) designation applied after a major redesign was initiated.

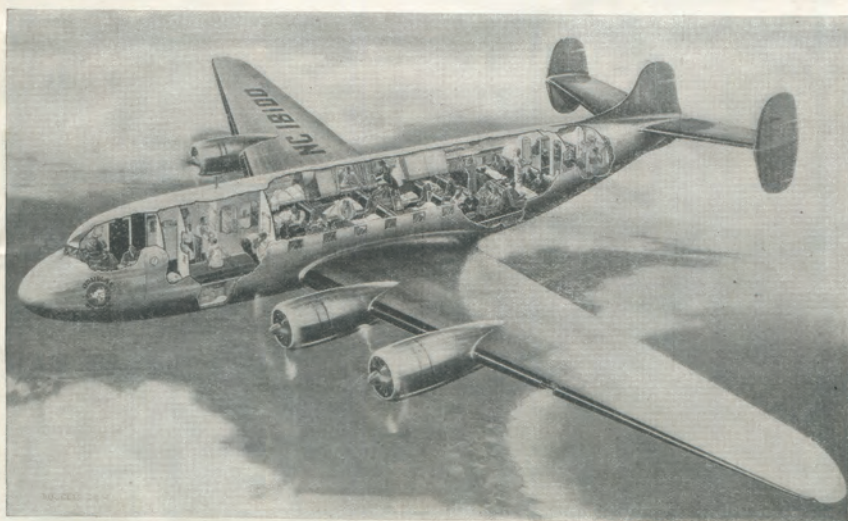
The DC-4E was short-lived, and images are uncommon. I first saw the DC-4E in a *Picture Postcard History of US Aviation*.³ The author illustrates two real photo postcards to which he assigns a rarity of B (Rare) on a scale of A (Very Rare) through G (Very Common). The DC-4E may be unfamiliar to the modern eye, but it was well publicized in its day. The designers of the Transports would surely have had access to more images than the single technical illustration from *Air Progress* (Figure 2) in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) file.⁴

One of the real photo postcards is the DC-4E taking off on its maiden flight. This same image (Figure 3) appears in the December 1938 issue of *Popular Aviation* in a full-page advertisement for Curtiss-Wright Technical Institute.⁵ The 1940 book *A Guide to American Airplanes* sports the DC-4E on its cover.⁶ This picture (Figure 4) shows the DC-4E in United Airlines livery.

Targeted for greater passenger capacity over longer routes than the DC-3, the DC-4E was the first of the giant land-based airliners (See Table 1).⁷ Among the DC-4E's design constraints were the thickness and length of existing runways and the height of existing



Figure 1.



NEW TRANSPORT

The modern transport, in this case represented by this splendid cutaway drawing of the giant DC-4 built by the Douglas company, shows the almost unbelievable strides made in passenger comfort and luxury since the advent of the early transport above. This forty-two-passenger ship has everything for comfort: automatic steam heat, dictaphones, electric toasters, curling irons, razors, percolators, a ship's library, check room, bridal suite and many other features. The DC-4 weighs over thirty-two tons fully loaded, has a wing span of more than 138 feet.

Figure 2.

ACHIEVEMENT



The great Douglas DC-4 (weight 65,000 lbs.) leaving the ground for the first time, as seen by the entire Curtiss-Wright Tech student body. Note tricycle landing gear.

MORE CURTISS-WRIGHT TECH GRADUATES WORKED ON THE DC-4

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PRESIDENT OF THE DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT CO., SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA
Says IN A LETTER TO MAJOR C. C. MOSELEY

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Figure 3.



Figure 4.

hangers. The DC-4E was the first airplane of its size to use tricycle landing gear. This feature meant that even for a normally scaled rudder, the distance from the ground to the top of the rudder was very high. The triple rudder was the solution that provided adequate control surface area without exceeding the hanger height restrictions.

Table 1. Transport Aircraft Size Comparison

	DC-3	DC-4E	C-54 (Version G)	DC-4
Fuselage Length	64.5 ft	97.6 ft	93.8 ft	97.4 ft
Wingspan	94.6 ft	138.3 ft	117.5 ft	117.4 ft
Gross Weight	25,000 lb	65,000 lb	73,000 lb	75,000 lb

The DC-4E took its maiden flight on June 7, 1938. After almost a year of testing, she was delivered in May 1939 to United Airlines, the first member of the consortium of airlines that helped to fund the prototype. United, American, TWA, Eastern and Pan American each took a six-week turn of flight test and evaluation, flying the DC-4E around the country.⁸

The Post Office Department submitted the request to BEP for what would become the Transports on December 2, 1940. At that time, the DC-3 was the dominant airliner in service, and the DC-4E was the harbinger of future transcontinental service. The BEP may have been tempted to use the DC-4E as the model for the Transports, but by December 1940, the DC-4E had been taken back to the drawing boards.

The airlines returned to Douglas with a list of change requests: a pressurized cabin, higher cruising speed, and — a single rudder. The single rudder request came from the maintenance crews. Douglas was able to provide a single rudder, and hanger height limits

apparently became less of an issue. As US entry into WW II loomed, the Department of Defense (DoD) asked United and American to cancel their orders for the redesigned DC-4. The DoD took over the redesign, and what emerged in 1942 was the slimmer, unpressurized, single-rudder C-54 Skymaster. The C-54 went through seven design releases throughout the war, and the first commercial DC-4 was delivered in January 1946 with only minor variations.



Figure 5.

Two other airplanes with triple rudders may have influenced the design of the Transports. The Boeing 314 Clipper took its maiden flight on the same day as the DC-4E. It did so with a single rudder, but flight tests showed the single provided inadequate lateral control. The 314 incorporated a double and, finally, a triple rudder before it entered service in 1939. The Lockheed Constellation is the most iconic triple-rudder airliner, but it postdates the release of the Transports. The contract between Howard Hughes and Lockheed was entered into in great secrecy on July 10, 1939.⁹ Prior to negotiations with Hughes, in April 1939, Lockheed released plans for a large 4-engine transport designated the L-44 Excilibur (Figure 5). On paper, the L-44 progressed from a single, double, and finally a triple rudder, but it never left the drawing boards before morphing into the Constellation.

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from the Farley Era Committee



The 1¢ Navy Stamp of the Army-Navy Series

by **Paul M. Holland**

USSS #16849 | Santa Barbara, CA 93111

✉pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com

It is my pleasure to send you this letter bearing the new one-cent stamp of the special series issued in commemoration of the Navy.

Included in the central design of this stamp are the portraits of John Paul Jones and John Barry, the foremost leaders of the early American Navy, with reproductions of the types of warships of that period.

— From a signed December 16, 1936 letter sent with a favor first day cover of the 1¢ Navy Stamp to Master Eddie White by Postmaster General James A. Farley.

The portraits of John Paul Jones and John Barry on the 1¢ Navy Stamp were based on engravings of paintings by Charles Wilson Peale and Gilbert Stuart, respectively.¹ Images of the original paintings are shown in Figure 1.

A model for the stamp's design drawn by A. R. Meissner is shown in Figure 2.¹ Note that the direction that John Barry faces in the painting has been reversed in the drawing. This is similar to the use of mirrored images of Presidential Medals from the United



Figure 1. John Paul Jones (left) and John Barry as painted by Charles Wilson Peale and Gilbert Stuart.

States Mint to produce right-facing presidential portraits for some of the stamps in the 1938 Presidential Series.²



Figure 2. Model drawing of stamp design by A. R. Meissner.¹

Portraits for the stamp were engraved by L. C. Kaufman, while Carl T. Arlt engraved the central vignette, frame and lettering. Four printing plates were used for the 1¢ Navy Stamp with plate numbers 21604 through 21607.¹

The 1¢ Navy Stamp was issued on December 15, 1936, even though the initially stated goal was that the entire series of Army-Navy Stamps be available for purchase “early in December, prior to the holiday season” with the one-cent values to have been issued about August 1.¹ A favor first day cover on official stationery addressed to a Master Eddie White with a letter from Postmaster General James A. Farley signed in green ink is shown in Figure 3.

So who was the young Master Eddie White who lived in New York City on the Upper East Side, near Central Park? According to my research, he came from a family of famous diplomats, including William Pinkney (1764-1822) and Henry White (1850-1927), and began receiving FDCs from PMG Farley when he was only eight years old. Eddie

In the final stamp design, the names John Paul Jones and John Barry appear within the portrait ovals, and below these are the names of the ships *Bon Homme Richard* and *Lexington* most closely associated with these naval heroes. The central vignette for the 1¢ stamp shows three contemporary ships under sail. I’ve been unable to identify the origin of this. Por-

December 15, 1936.

Master Eddie White,
125 E. 84th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Eddie:

It is my pleasure to send you this letter bearing the new one-cent stamp of the special series issued in commemoration of the Navy.

Included in the central design of the stamp are the portraits of John Paul Jones and John Barry, the foremost leaders of the early American Navy, with reproductions of the types of warships of that period.

This letter is being mailed through the Washington, D. C., post office, having the first-day sale of the new stamp on this date.

Very truly yours,

John A. Farley

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL
WASHINGTON
OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Master Eddie White,
125 E. 84th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Figure 3. Favor FDC for the 1¢ Navy stamp sent to Master Eddie White by PMG Farley.

White's ancestor William Pinkney was appointed by President Thomas Jefferson to serve with James Monroe as co-ministers to Great Britain in 1806-7, where they negotiated the Monroe-Pinkney Treaty. Under President James Madison, Pinkney was US Attorney General, and under President James Monroe served as US Minister Plenipotentiary to Russia, among other diplomatic missions. President Theodore Roosevelt considered Eddie White's great grandfather Henry White "the most useful man in the entire diplomatic service, during my Presidency and for many years before." Colonel House, the chief aide to President Woodrow Wilson, called White "the most accomplished diplomatist this country has ever produced," and White was one of the signers of the Treaty of Versailles.

Shown in Figure 4 is an FDC of the 1¢ Navy stamp on official White House stationery sent to Jules Rodier, a white-haired telegraph operator who had been in the White House since the days of William McKinley. FDR must have liked him since, in 1941, he issued Executive Order 8903 titled "Exemption of Jules A. Rodier From Compulsory Retirement for Age." Note the first class franking at a rate of 2¢ for local delivery in Washington, DC.

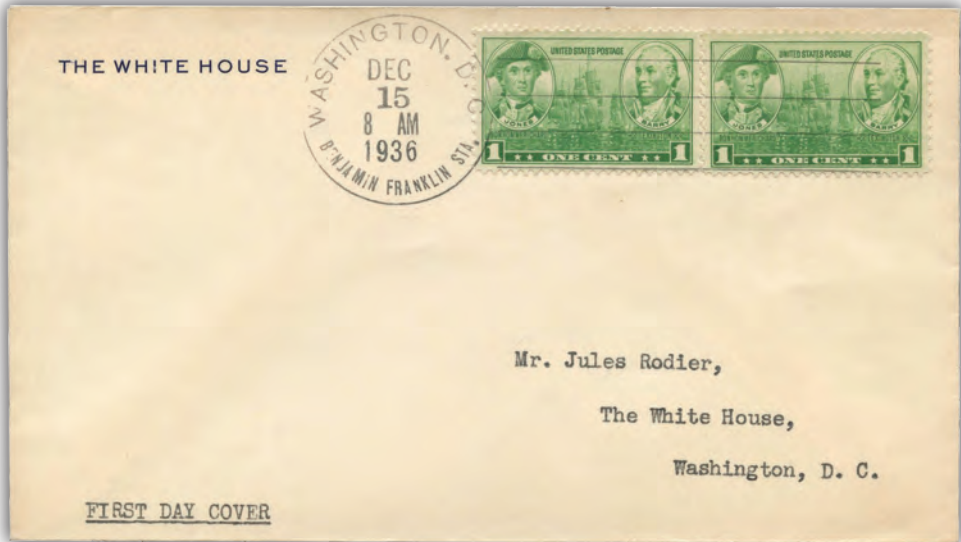


Figure 4. FDC of 1¢ Navy stamp sent to Jules Rodier on White House stationery.

A first day cover hand addressed to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt with a plate number block of four is shown in Figure 5. Note the hand-applied cancellation and plate number 21605 block. The cachet itself appears to be of a general purpose type by an unknown cachet maker. Others with the identical red medallion and words "First Day of Issue" in blue at the top are known but with different central vignettes and wording at the bottom. Doug Henkle reports these being used for FDCs of a variety of different stamps.

John Paul Jones is especially famous for the desperate 1779 sea battle between the *Bonhomme Richard* and the HMS *Serapis* off the British coast (see Figure 6), where he is said to have responded, "I have not yet begun to fight!" when called out to surrender once it became clear that he was outgunned at point blank range by the more heavily armed *Serapis* during the battle. Instead, Jones decided to close and grapple, lashing the

two ships together. Using his deck guns and Marine marksmen to clear the *Serapis*' decks, he ultimately forced the captain of the British ship to surrender instead. The *Bonhomme Richard* was so badly damaged in the fight that it eventually sank, and John Paul Jones then took command of the *Serapis*.

Born John Paul, Jones led a very tumultuous life, going to sea at the age of 13, captaining several merchantmen, and in 1773 fleeing to Virginia from Tobago after being accused



Figure 5. FDC with plate number block of four sent to FDR.



Figure 6. Action Between the *Serapis* and *Bonhomme Richard*, painted by Richard Paton.

of murdering a mutinous crewman with a sword in a dispute over wages. In America, he added Jones as a surname and volunteered for naval service in the American Revolution. Jones had some early successes but frequently disagreed with those in authority about naval strategy, which had left much of the Continental Navy blockaded in port by the superior British fleet. Jones then sailed for France aboard *Ranger* in November 1777, where Benjamin Franklin and others were more receptive to his recommendations that British merchant shipping be attacked around the British Isles. Using the *Ranger* and eventually the *Bonhomme Richard* (named after Franklin), Jones successfully pursued this approach. After terrorizing the British coastline while based in France, John Paul Jones was awarded a gold medal by Congress following the Revolutionary War. But he also found himself without a command when Congress decided to give the USS *America* to France to replace a wrecked warship in appreciation for French aid during the war. In Europe and frustrated after the war, Jones accepted an appointment in the Russian Navy as rear admiral, but this did not go well. After being accused of sexual assault, he returned to Paris embittered and physically broken. He died in 1792 and was buried in Paris. His body was exhumed in 1905, and his remains are now enshrined at the United States Naval Academy Chapel in Annapolis.

What is not so well known is that John Paul Jones was an historical figure of special interest to Franklin D. Roosevelt. While recovering from polio, FDR wrote a silent movie scenario about the life of John Paul Jones. FDR's 29-page treatment for a possible screenplay was submitted to Paramount Pictures in May 1923, presenting a dilemma for Adolf Zukor, founder and head of the studio, who was not really interested in producing such a film. However, as a prominent Roosevelt, recent vice-presidential candidate, and former assistant secretary of the Navy, FDR's submission was carefully "sidetracked" in an attempt to let him down as gently as possible. Although disappointed, FDR, of course, went on to other things...

As for John Barry, he was placed in command of the *Lexington* on December 7, 1775, becoming the very first navy captain to be commissioned during the Revolutionary War. The *Lexington* was best known for capturing the *Edward*, the tender of a British man-of-war, and bringing it into port in Philadelphia in April 1776. After the war in 1797, Barry became the first US naval officer promoted to the rank of commodore, thus becoming the United States Navy's first flag officer. Commodore Barry later commanded the USS *United States*, one of the six original frigates authorized for construction by the Naval Act of 1794, during the quasi-war with France. He remained head of the Navy until his death in September 1803. Barry died childless, but it's interesting to note that Stephen Decatur, a naval hero featured on the 2¢ Navy stamp,³ began his career under Barry as a midshipman aboard the USS *United States*. Barry has often been referred to as "The Father of the American Navy." Although, this is a distinction sometimes shared with John Paul Jones and (later President) John Adams, who was especially instrumental in obtaining funding for building a navy.

A registered airmail special delivery cover on official Postmaster General stationery franked with a plate number block of four of the 1¢ Navy stamps, plus an imperforate pair of the 16¢ airmail special delivery stamps from the special printing (Scott 771) is shown in Figure 7. Note the use of double-blind oval registration cancellations. Back-stamps show that it was mailed on January 2, 1937, arriving on January 4, and is *not* a

first day cover. Sent to Dr. R. E. Jacques in Kansas City, Missouri, another back stamp and penciled notations show that special delivery was attempted at 8:25 am, but the building was closed, so a note was left. Plate block number 21604 was used on this cover, which, together with the plate number 21605 block shown earlier, provides examples of the first two plate numbers of the 1¢ Navy stamps.



Figure 7. Registered airmail special delivery cover on official Postmaster General stationery.

Shown in Figure 8 is an unusual registered mail cover on official Third Assistant Postmaster General stationery from the Philatelic Agency that was sent to a stamp collector in Oceanside, New York. This employs a single 1¢ Navy stamp to make up the 21¢ rate when combined with two examples of the 1937 10¢ Great Smoky Mountains souvenir sheet. Registration backstamps show that this was mailed from Washington, DC, on September 14, 1937, and received later the same day. The timing and franking suggest that this was a double-weight cover that likely contained a quantity of 10¢ Great Smoky Mountains souvenir sheets since these sheets were first issued on August 26, 1937, and thus was the most recent item then available from the Division of Stamps at the Philatelic Agency. Also, interestingly the two souvenir sheets provide examples of both of the plate numbers used, mainly 21695 and 21696.

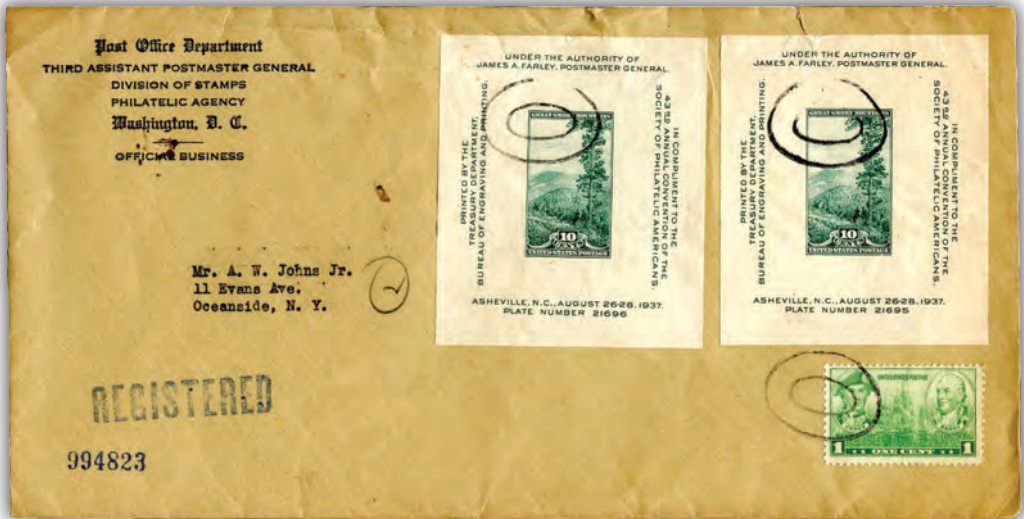


Figure 8. FDC on official Third Assistant PMG stationery from the Philatelic Agency.

Finally, the 10¢ Great Smoky Mountains souvenir sheet itself was the last of the National Parks series items issued. Their use by the Philatelic Agency, coupled with the 1¢ Navy stamp, which was the most recent 1¢ commemorative stamp available at the time, is entirely consistent with their policy of using current stamps for franking. It also fortuitously recalls the interesting linkage between the National Parks and Army-Navy series of stamps. Namely, following the great success of the ten-stamp National Parks series of 1934, it was reported that on March 6, 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt requested that the Post Office Department prepare a new “series of postage stamps in homage to famous soldiers and sailors.”¹

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1. Max G. Johl, *The United States Commemorative Postage Stamps of the Twentieth Century: Volume II 1935-1947*, H. L. Lindquist: New York, 1947, pages 40, 44-45.
2. Paul M. Holland, “Presidential Series \$5 Coolidge Stamp: metals used for portraits, links to other Prexie favor FDCs, and more...”, *The United States Specialist*, October 2020, pages 443-457.
3. Paul M. Holland, “The 2¢ Navy Stamp of the Army-Navy Series”, *The United States Specialist*, May 2023, pages 203-211.



from the Washington-Franklin Issues Committee

“Accounted For” Markings on the Washington-Franklin Heads

by **Andrew S. Kelley**

USSS #16734 | ✉ stamps@andrewkelley.net



Figure 1. “Surface Division” rejection marking on Scott 528.

To the delight of collectors and the dismay of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the Bureau’s stamp production did not always go as planned. Starting in late 1918 (or perhaps earlier), the Bureau used a handstamp to mark defective work. The Bureau probably intended to destroy the marked stamps, perhaps after salvaging non-defective panes from the same sheet, but a handful of examples have reached collectors.

There are two reported varieties of the rejection hand stamp: a “Printing Division” marking applied to intaglio-printed stamps and a “Surface Division” marking applied to stamps printed via offset lithography (aka “surface printing”). These markings have received surprisingly little attention in the literature.¹ This article provides the first census of the markings and endeavors to explain them.

The “Printing Division” Mark on Intaglio Stamps

There are four reported examples of a rejection marking on intaglio Washington-Franklin stamps. Three of these are on Scott 498, a one-cent stamp.² Two of these are depicted in Figure 2 and Figure 3. Notably, the marking in Figure 3 is on the back of the block, is dated July 2, 1919, and is signed in blue grease pencil or crayon. The marking on both figures reads “Printing Division, BEP / The subjects missing / from this sheet have been / properly accounted for. / Custodian of Presses.” Figure 3 includes a July 2, 1919, date stamp.



Figure 2. Rejection Marking on Scott 498 (image courtesy of John Hotchner).



Figure 3. Rejection Marking on the back of a block of Scott 498 (image courtesy of John Hotchner).

In 1919, Philip Ward Jr. reported this marking on Scott 509, a nine-cent intaglio stamp. Based on Ward's description, it is like Figure 3:

Mr. A. E. Owen advises us that he has obtained a part sheet of the 9c unwatermarked, perforation 11, stamped, by means of a rubber stamp, on the back "October 28—Subjects missing from this sheet properly accounted for. Custodian of Presses." This is a most interesting block, for we believe in the past such part sheets were always destroyed.³

I would welcome a scan of this block for study.

The “Surface Division” Marking on the Offset Lithographed Stamps

In 1918 the Bureau produced postage stamps by offset lithography for the first time. To make these stamps, they enlisted the services of the Bureau’s “Surface Division,” which previously had printed only revenue stamps and non-stamp paper. The Surface Division employed its intaglio counterpart’s practice of marking defective work with a rubber stamp. The Surface Division marking reads “SURFACE DIVISION / The subjects missing / from this sheet have been / properly accounted for.” This marking is found on all three denominations of the offset stamps.

There is one reported example on the one-cent offset, Scott 525. See Figure 4. This example is undated and unsigned, though the date may have been cut off when the 400-subject sheet was cut into 100-subject post-office panes. Presumably, the sheet was rejected because of the extremely light shade of the stamp. Though not apparent from the scan, the handstamp ink is reportedly purple.⁴



Figure 4. Surface Division mark on Scott 525 (image courtesy of Schuyler J. Rumsey Philatelic Auctions, Inc.).

I know of one example of the marking on the two-cent offset, illustrated in Figure 1, with a closeup in Figure 5. The Bureau rejected this block because a portion of the impression was missing. This defect was probably caused by a partial overlap with another sheet of paper when the marked sheet went through the press. Ironically—given that the marking mentions “subjects missing”—this is the only example where the mark was used on a sheet with missing subjects. The block is also marked with a grease pencil.



Figure 5. Closeup of surface division marking from Figure 1.



Figure 6. *Rejection Marking on Scott 530, plate 9088 (despite the manuscript marking on the backing paper, this is not Scott 529).*

The rejection marking is slightly more plentiful on the three-cent offset, with (probably) five examples reported, all on Scott 530, the Type IV offset.

The first three-cent example is depicted in Figure 6. The pane is unevenly inked, with much heavier inking on the right. It is marked with the rejection marking and a grease pencil but not dated. (Plate 9088 was at press from November 8–12, 1918; presumably, the marking was made shortly thereafter.⁵) Figure 7 is a closeup of the marking. Although it is hard to read the black mark against the purple background, I have confirmed that the mark is the same as the marking on the two-cent block above.

The second example is Figure 8. It has the opposite inking problem: the subjects on that sheet range from light to very light and are blurry. It is marked with the rejection mark



Figure 7. Closeup of rejection marking from Figure 6.



Figure 8. Rejection Marking on Scott 530, plate No. 9581 (image courtesy of the late Gerald Nylander).



Figure 9. Closeup of Marking from Figure 8 (image courtesy of the late Gerald Nylander).



Figure 10. Rejection mark on a block with preprint paper fold (image reproduced from Regency-Superior Stamp Auction catalog).

made such a rudimentary error. It is more likely that both reported panes came from the same poorly printed 400-subject sheet, with a rejection marking on both the upper right and upper left panes.

In 1919, Philip H. Ward Jr. reported two examples of the marking on the three-cent offset, one of which is probably the same pane as in Figure 8:

Mr. Roy S. Barker advises that he has located two sheets from the lower left pane of the 3c surface print type IV bearing plates numbers 9581 and 9586, each hand stamped on the face "Surface Division—All Subjects missing from this sheet have been properly accounted for." . . . As there were no subjects missing from the two panes owned by Mr. Barker, we assume that

but not grease pencil. Notably, the marking is purple rather than black. See Figure 9 for a closeup of the marking. This example comes from plate 9581, which was at press from December 31, 1918, through January 2, 1919, roughly two months after the example in Figure 6.⁶

Portions of the selvage are missing from both the Figure 6 and Figure 8 panes. The Bureau may have removed some of the selvage to mark the stamps for destruction. However, it is more likely that the selvage was lost to poor handling.

Perhaps the most spectacular three-cent example is illustrated in Figure 10.⁷ A preprint paper fold created a large blank area between portions of two stamps. The paper was unfolded prior to perforation, with a rejection mark and grease pencil added.

There is a smattering of other reports of the Surface Division mark on the three-cent offset. David Berest reported a Surface Division mark on an upper right pane from plate 9088, the same plate as Figure 6.⁸ Given the scarcity of the Surface Division markings, it would be a remarkable coincidence if two marked panes from the same plate escaped the Bureau. It is possible that Berest confused right and left and was reporting Figure 9. However, he was a sophisticated collector and a careful student of the offsets, and it would be surprising if he

*the overprint was simply placed upon the stamps due to the fact that they were a blurred pale print and this was an indication to the inspector that the sheets should be removed.*⁹

Figure 8 matches Ward’s description of a lower left pane from plate 9581 with a pale and blurry impression, so it seems likely that it is the pane he reported. I am unaware of the whereabouts of the plate 9586 pane and would welcome a scan for study.

A Note About Revenues

The Surface Division printed a lot of offset lithographed revenue stamps. However, I conferred with two revenue experts; neither has seen a “Surface Division” marking on revenue stamps. I welcome reports of the marking on these stamps.

A Preliminary Census

Taking these reports together, I am aware of ten examples of a rejection marking, listed below. I welcome reports of additional examples.

Scott	¢	Plate #	Description	Source
498	1¢	n/a	Printing Division mark on face of block, LR pane. Includes plate finisher’s initials.	Figure 2
498	1¢	n/a	Printing Division mark on back of block from left margin of pane. Dated July 2, 1919 and signed in grease pencil.	Figure 3
498	1¢	n/a		Hotchner Report ¹⁰
525	1¢	n/a	Surface division mark on face of block. The mark is in purple ink.	Figure 4 ¹¹
528	2¢	n/a	Block of 20, parts of several subjects missing.	Figure 1
530	3¢	9088	Upper left pane	Figure 3
530	3¢	9088	Upper right pane	Berest Report ¹²
530	3¢	9581	Lower left pane. The mark is in purple ink.	Figure 8
530	3¢	9586	Lower left pane	Ward Report ¹³
530	3¢	n/a	Preprint paper fold, block of two	Figure 10 ¹⁴

An Explanation for the Markings

The use and purposes of the markings are puzzling, given that they refer to missing subjects when, in nearly all cases, no subjects were missing from the sheets to which it was applied.

The most likely explanation is that the marks were intended to identify defective material so that an inspector could remove it from production.¹⁵ More precisely, the mark was probably used on 400-subject sheets when one or more 100-subject panes on the sheet were defective, but the others were usable. After printing, but before perforating, an inspector would mark faulty portion(s) of the sheet. Then, after the panes were perforated and separated into 100-subject post office panes, the marked panes would be destroyed. The Bureau used a similar practice when perforating torn sheets—patching torn



Figure 11. Scott 499 torn during horizontal perforation, then patched to facilitate vertical perforation.

400-subject panes so they could be perforated and undamaged 100-subject panes salvaged for sale.¹⁶ See Figure 11 for an example; it was torn during horizontal perforating but patched to facilitate vertical perforating, thereby salvaging undamaged panes.¹⁷

It is surprising that the Bureau would go to such great lengths to avoid waste, particularly when the cost to pro-

duce a 100-subject pane was about eight-tenths of a cent.¹⁸ But there are many examples of the Bureau's extreme thrift during the Washington-Franklin era. These include issuing coil waste, reusing paper with partial or faint impressions on the three-cent offset,¹⁹ issuing the stamps from a brief experiment with the Rosback perforator (Scott 536) and issuing many poorly printed offset stamps. The impulse to thrift—especially wartime thrift—was powerful.

Acknowledgements

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———. "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States." *Mekeel's Weekly Stamp News* 33, no. 15 (April 12, 1919): 129, 134.

Weiss, Larry S. "Extra Plate Numbers—1." *The United States Specialist* 56, no. 12 (December 1985): 507–24.

Endnotes

1. Ward, Jr., "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States," March 22, 1919 (reporting the discovery of a part sheet of Scott 509 with a rejection mark); Ward, Jr., "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States," April 12, 1919 (reporting two sheets—both Scott 530—with rejection marks); Berest, "Offset Issues" (reporting a rejection mark on Scott 530); Hotchner, "Philatelic Royalty of the 20th Century, Rejections and Repairs in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing - Part I: From the Beginning to the Prexie Era" (reporting on the blocks in Figures 2 and 3); Hotchner, "Philatelic Royalty of the 20th Century, Rejections and Repairs in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing - Part V: An Addendum" (reporting the block in Figure 1). Hotchner's articles are reproduced in Hotchner, *Philatelic Royalty of the 20th Century: Stories behind Modern-Era U.S. Treasures*, 2, 32–33.

2. Hotchner, "Philatelic Royalty of the 20th Century, Rejections and Repairs in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing - Part I: From the Beginning to the Prexie Era," 31.

3. Ward, Jr., "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States," March 22, 1919.

4. See Philatelic Foundation Certificate 520556.

5. Bureau Issues Association, BIA Plate Number Checklist.

6. Ibid.

7. Reported in "APS Stamp Show Auction" lot 1466.

8. Berest, "Offset Issues."

9. Ward, Jr., "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States," April 12, 1919.

10. Hotchner, "Philatelic Royalty of the 20th Century, Rejections and Repairs in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing - Part I: From the Beginning to the Prexie Era."

11. "The Westpex Sale. Public Auction No. 56" lot 2100.

12. Berest, "Offset Issues."

13. Ward, Jr., "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States," April 12, 1919.

14. "APS Stamp Show Auction" lot 1466.

15. Ward first advanced this theory. Ward, Jr., "Chronicle of New Issues and Varieties, United States," April 12, 1919.

16. See, for example, Luff "Notes of the Month" (Bureau patched sheets during perforation to preserve the undamaged panes; only certain workers could remove defective stamps from production).

17. A member of the Washington-Franklin Committee suggested that the rejection marks might have been used to facilitate issuing partial or defective panes to post offices. On this theory, the mark (which talks about "accounting for" missing subjects) would indicate to a postal clerk that they should issue the sound stamps while the defective stamps had been accounted for and could be discarded. This explanation strikes me as unlikely. There are no subjects missing from most of the extant examples, and in some cases (as in Figure 8), the entire pane is defective. It also seems unlikely that the Post Office would give clerks discretion to determine which stamps were salable and which should be discarded.

18. Post Office correspondence indicates that the cost to produce offset Washington-Franklins was \$0.078 per thousand. See August 5, 1919, letter from Third Assistant Postmaster General A.M. Dockery to Bureau Director James Wilmeth, quoted in Lawrence, "APS Acquires Rosback Rotary Perforator," 826.

19. Phillips, "US 1918—3c Purple, Double Printed" (reporting on the Bureau intentionally running paper through the press twice when the first impression was faint); Weiss, "Extra Plate Numbers—1," 512 (discussing a sheet with a partial impression of Scott 529 and a full impression of Scott 530. The sheet was evidently reused to conserve paper).

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– previously pictured –

#5684-87 Flag on Barns Coil
P22222

◀ **#????**
B1111

Tulip Blossoms Coil



▲ **#????** **Tulip Blossoms Booklet**
B1111

▼ **#????** **Flag**
B111 **UL UR LL LR**
2r x 4c **1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8***



▲ **#????** **Flag Coil (100)**
B111
P111



#????
B111

Flag Coil (3000,10000)



#????
B111
P111

Flag Booklet



#????

Roy Lichtenstein

B111111

+

+

LL

LR

2r x 2c

1,2,3,4*

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17462	David Goodhart, Canton, OH
17463	Gary Carlson, Columbus, OH
17464	William Phillips, York, PA
17465	Eric Puchalski, Lake Forest, CA
17466	Phillip Hunt, Castle Hill, NSW, Australia
17467	Chad Payne, Springfield, IL

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ADDITIONS:	
New members	5
Total	5
SUBTRACTIONS:	
Resigned	1
Total	1
NET CHANGE	4
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP	
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17450-17458

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17449-174493

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7542 Norman D. Kubler

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GREAT AMERICAN STAMP SHOW BOOTH #613 One Stop Shopping: US, CSA, Possessions, Specialized Collections. Singles Rare Plate Nos., Coils, Booklets, Proofs, Specimens and Postal History. Huntington Convention Center - Hall C, Cleveland, Ohio - August 10-13. Roy DeLafosse & Lewis Kaufman, email: kerik1@aol.com. [1122]

Index of Advertisers

American Plate Number Single Society (www.apnss.org)	245
Barney's Stamps (www.barneystamps.com)	261
Mountainside Stamps, Coins and Currency (www.mountainsidestampsandcoins.com)	261
Precancel Stamp Society (www.precancels.com)	245

Robert A. Siegel Auction Galleries (www.siegelauctions.com)	243
Scott A. Shaulis (www.shaulisstamps.com)	285
U.S. Philatelic Classics Society (www.uspcs.org)	288
United States Stamp Society (www.usstamps.org) Inside front cover, 244, back cover	

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