



# The United States SPECIALIST

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

WHOLE NUMBER 1137



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— plus —



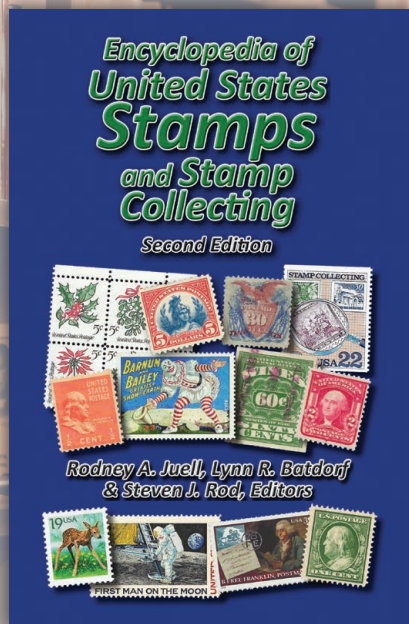
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— and —

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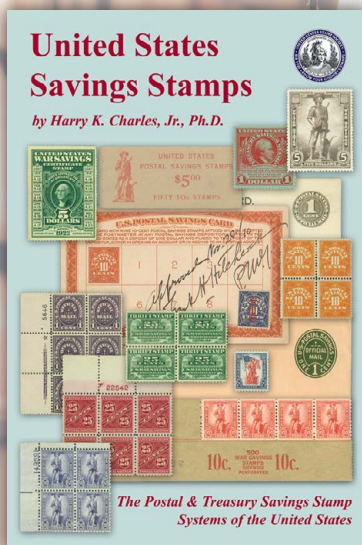
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# The United States SPECIALIST

*the journal of the United States Stamp Society*

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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

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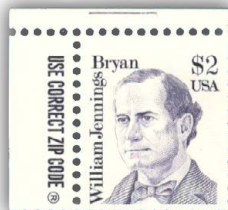
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#### Andrew S. Kelley, Editor

9038 East 25th Drive  
Denver, CO 80238  
(720) 839-5848

email: [editor@usstamps.org](mailto:editor@usstamps.org)

[www.usstamps.org](http://www.usstamps.org)

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**Correspondence concerning business affairs of the Society, including membership and changes in address, should be addressed to the Executive Secretary, PO Box 1602, Hockessin, DE 19707-5602.**

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THE UNITED STATES SPECIALIST  
Founded 1930 as The Bureau Specialist

#### EDITOR

**ANDREW S. KELLEY**

9038 East 25th Drive  
Denver, CO 80238  
email: editor@usstamps.org

**United States Stamp Society  
Bureau Issues Association, Inc.**

P.O. Box 1602  
Hockessin, DE 19707-5602

#### CHAIRMAN

**Roger S. Brody**

P.O. Box 5836  
Somerset, NJ 08875-5836  
email: brody@usstamps.org

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P.O. Box 1005  
Mountainside, NJ 07092  
email: 8605@comcast.net

#### VICE PRESIDENT

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P.O. Box 3211  
Fayville, MA 01745-3211  
email: coverlover@gmail.com

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10703 Kings Riding Way, Unit T-1  
Rockville, MD 20852-5420  
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P.O. Box 690042, Houston, TX 77269  
email: stottsjd@swbell.net

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P.O. Box 1194, Rainier, OR 97048  
email: MOPerry@mac.com

##### DURLAND EDITOR

**Kim D. Johnson**

310 E N 3rd Street, Georgetown, IL 61846  
email: westhome1@aol.com

##### ESSAY-PROOF

**James Patterson**

1850 North Central Avenue, No. 1400  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
email: jhpatterson@yahoo.com

##### EXHIBIT PDFs

**Chris Steenerson**

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email: Chris@RxStamps.com

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email: pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com

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##### PRECANCELS

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P.O. Box 1005, Mountainside, NJ 07092  
VENDING AND AFFIXING  
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40 Carolyn Place, Chappaqua, NY 10514  
email: djryterband@fwcook.com

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**Greg Shoults**

11248 Frederick Lane  
Twinsburg, OH 44087  
email: coilcollector@hotmail.com

**Andrew S. Kelley**

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#### WEBMASTER

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email: lampson@usstamps.org

#### — Study Groups —

##### DUMMY STAMPS

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email: mike@ludeman.net





## 2024 Annual Meeting Report NOJEX September 27–29, 2024

by **Nicholas Lombardi**

The 2024 Annual Meeting of the United States Stamp Society was held at the NOJEX stamp show in Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey, from April 26<sup>th</sup> through the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The official business of the Society was conducted at the Board of Governors Meeting on Friday afternoon and the Annual General Membership Meeting on Saturday. The Board of Governors discussed a variety of issues at their meeting, including the possibility of having to raise our annual dues. Our dues have been set at \$25 per year for as long as anyone could remember even though the cost of producing and mailing *The United States Specialist* each month has risen substantially. A number of different possibilities were put forth and will be studied by the Board during the upcoming year. The annual dues will remain at \$25 for the 2025 year. Although Treasurer Dave Sugar was unable to attend the meeting, he provided a summary of the Society's financial position and the Society is in good financial shape. This is due in large part to the generosity of the membership in terms of both annual and estate donations, so please consider a donation when it comes time to renew your membership or review your will.

Speaking of publications, it was noted that due to a great demand for the Durland 2020 catalog which was sold out some time ago, the Board had authorized the reprinting of 100 copies which should last us until the next edition. That edition would normally have been done in 2024, but it was decided to wait until 2026 for the next edition which we will release at the Boston 2026 International show and will also coincide with the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Society.

The Annual General Membership Meeting was held on Saturday afternoon. The meeting began, as is customary, with each attendee introducing him or herself and letting everyone know where they were from. In addition to informing the members of what had transpired at the



*Nicholas Lombardi presenting the 2023 Hopkinson Literature Award to Andrew Kelley.*

Board of Governors meeting earlier, it was noted that the First Bureau Issue Study Group is in need of a new chairperson. If you would be willing to help out with this, please let me know.

One of the highlights of our Annual General Membership Meeting is the presentation of the Walter W. Hopkinson Literature Award for the best article or series of articles, which appeared in *The United States Specialist* during the previous year. Our 2023 award winner, Andrew S. Kelley, was on hand to accept the award for his article "Authenticating Scott 530c—Triple Impression on the Three Cent Offset" which appeared in the May 2023 issue of *The Specialist*.

Unfortunately, no one who was to receive their membership anniversary pin was in attendance. It was noted that this year we had six members who will receive their 50 year pins, sixteen who will receive 25 year pins and twenty-seven who will receive 15 year pins. The list of these members appeared in the March issue of *The Specialist*. All of these pins will be mailed to the recipients. On behalf of the Board of Governors, thank you all for being such loyal members of the Society.

The exhibit frames at the show were filled with a wide array of material from our Society members. The Society's prestigious Hugh M. Southgate Award was won by Greg Shoults for his exhibit "Washington & Franklin Coils: The Development of the Third Bureau Flat Plate & Coil Waste Issues of 1908–1915" which also won the Grand Award for the entire show, as well as the Statue of Freedom Medal, and the NOJEX Best US Exhibit award. Louis Caprario took the Reserve Grand with his exhibit "Pre-Prohibition Beer Stamps 1866–1919". Other Society members whose work appeared in the frames included Louis Fiset, Larry Haber, Terence Hines, Marvin & Judith Platt, Andrew S. Kelley, Michael Clark, David Mayo and Stephen Suffet. In total, our members accounted for 46% of the exhibit frames.

Our Society table was staffed continuously throughout the three days of the show. Members stopped by to purchase books, exchange information, or just to rest up. We signed up several new members as well as others who renewed their memberships. Special thanks go out to Roger Brody, Bob Rufe and Jerry Davis for helping man the booth at different times.

Those members visiting the booth included:

|                  |                  |                 |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Dr. Steve Berlin | Walter Kasell    | Wade Saadi      |
| Roger Brody      | Andrew S. Kelley | Phil Sager      |
| Louis Caprario   | Andy Kupersmit   | Jose Saunders   |
| Michael Clark    | Rob Loeffler     | Rick Schaefer   |
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| Larry Haber      | Robert Rose      | Alan Warren     |
| Labron Harris    | Ray Rossi        | Jim Wills       |
| Tom Jacks        | Bob Rufe         | Cheng-Hsin Yang |

Our 2025 Annual Meeting will take place at the Garfield Perry Show (“March Party”) in Strongsville, Ohio, the weekend of March 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup>. So start making plans now to attend this great show. We will be providing more information about the Society’s show activities as it becomes available. Our 2026 Annual Meeting, will take place at the Boston 2026 International show which is sure to be a blockbuster.



*Nicholas Lombardi, Bob Rufe, and Roger Brody staff the USSS Society Table at NOJEX.*

### Additional Election Bio

James Robinson’s election biography was inadvertently omitted from the October 2024 *Specialist*. It appears below. Your Editor apologizes for the error.

**Governor—James Robinson.** James Robinson is retired from a career in commercial construction and lives in Fernandina Beach, Florida. A lifelong collector, active researcher, and writer, his specialty for over 30 years has been the US Fourth Bureau Issue and associated postal history. Secondary research interests include the development of rotary postage stamp production, the development of the US domestic and foreign airmail systems, the registered mail system, and Post Office forms.

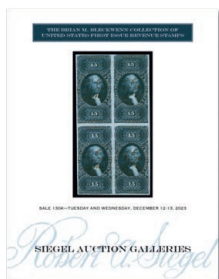
Jim has authored 10 publications for *The United States Specialist*, with two new articles submitted and currently in pre-publication. He is a two-time recipient of the Society’s Hopkinson Memorial Literature Award, winning in 2014 and 2022. He contributed two chapters and co-authored a third in the 2022 Fourth Bureau Issue centennial book published by the Society. He is a member of the Society’s Fourth Bureau Issues and Marginal Markings committees and the Registered Mail study Group. Philatelic organization memberships include the United States Stamp Society and the American Philatelic Society.

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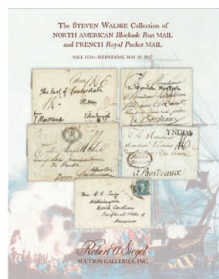
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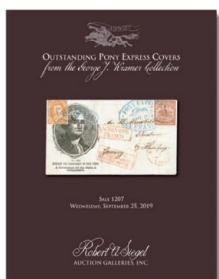
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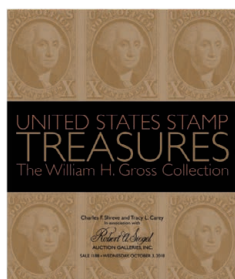
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*Stamps of the FDR Era*

## FDR and the 1942 China Resistance Stamp

by **Paul M. Holland**

USSS #16849 | ✉ [pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com](mailto:pholland.thorleaf@gmail.com)



“ This stamp was issued to symbolize the splendid resistance of China to the aggressive forces of Japan for the past five years. It pictures [sic] Lincoln and Sun Yat-sen, two great emancipators in the history of the world. Sun Yat-sen, a physician, eminent leader, statesman, and founder of the Chinese Republic, is a patron saint of China today. Lincoln, of course, is incomparable in his place in our history, and his teachings and philosophy were an inspiration to Sun Yat-sen. This stamp memorializes our collaboration with the Chinese people in their valiant fight for liberty. ”

—From a signed July 7, 1942, letter sent with a Favor First Day Cover of the 5¢ China Resistance stamp sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant Postmaster General, Roy M. North

Many scholars consider the beginning of World War II to have occurred with the Marco Polo Bridge incident in Beijing on July 7, 1937, when Japanese and Chinese forces opened fire on each other after a Japanese soldier went missing. Although the Japanese soldier apparently had simply wandered off without leave, reputedly to visit a brothel,

and was later found unharmed, this “incident” prompted a full-scale Japanese invasion of the rest of China.

At first, the Japanese were convinced that China could be swiftly and easily conquered. But China’s vast interior, coupled with the Imperial Japanese Army’s extreme brutality towards the civilian population, hardened Chinese resistance and soon turned the Japanese invasion into a quagmire. On the other hand, the powerful Japanese Imperial Navy allowed Chinese port cities to be quickly dominated, and one of the key early battles of the Sino-Japanese war became the battle for Shanghai.



**Figure 1. Chinese stamp canceled during the battle of Shanghai on October 18, 1937.**

Perhaps symbolic of this is the stamp from my representative worldwide collection shown in Figure 1. This airmail stamp (Scott C18) shows an airplane flying over the Great Wall of China. Of special interest, it has a “socked on the nose” cancellation showing usage during the battle of Shanghai on October 18, 1937.

In the mid-1930s, Shanghai was one of the largest cities in the world with a population of three million. Although only 50,000 or so were of European origin, under the unequal terms of the Shanghai International Settlement dating back to the Opium Wars in the 1860s, they enjoyed a form of extraterritorial control over a significant part of the city. Thus as a “Treaty Port,” Shanghai had developed a reputation as the New York or Paris of the Far East, as reflected by the lavish opening nightclub scene in the 1984 movie *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*.

Interestingly, when the invading Japanese occupied the rest of Shanghai, they grudgingly respected Shanghai International Settlement rights until after their December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. As a result, ordinary Chinese postage stamps remained valid, and it was not until 1942 that the Japanese began issuing overprinted Chinese occupation stamps.

This unusual situation helps explain the cover from my collection that was sent to FDR from Shanghai while the Japanese occupied significant portions of China on October 8, 1939. Shown in Figure 2, this uncensored cover is franked with a horizontal pair of Chinese stamps depicting Sun Yat-Sen (Scott 302). Addressed to “President Roosevelt, Hyde Park, New York,” it is also postmarked Hyde Park November 7, 1939. Interestingly, although FDR had in fact been at his home in Hyde Park, he left for Washington the following day, and the cover was forwarded to him at the White House.

The idea of a stamp to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the resistance of the Chinese people to Japanese aggression clearly originated with FDR, who was an avid worldwide stamp collector whose ancestors had been actively involved in the China trade.



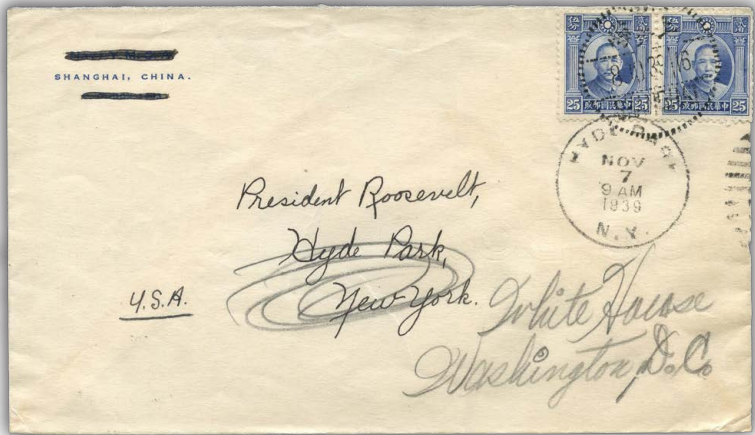


Figure 2. Cover from Shanghai sent to FDR during the Japanese invasion of China on October 8, 1939.

According to Lena Shawen, who worked for the Post Office Department under the Postmaster General, especially in helping to stage first day of issue ceremonies, “the design of this stamp occasioned more work and research in our office than any of the other stamps issued during these years.”<sup>1</sup>

Curiously, it’s possible to trace the design basis for this Chinese Resistance stamp to a remarkable set of four Chinese stamps (Scott 364–367) printed by the American Bank Note Company (ABNC). Issued on July 4, 1939, for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United



Figure 3. Chinese stamps printed by the American Bank Note Company for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States Constitution in 1939.

States Constitution, examples from my representative worldwide stamp collection are shown in Figure 3. FDR would certainly have been familiar with them, as he possessed special presentation albums for each of these in his stamp collection.<sup>2</sup> Of particular note, these colorful flag stamps show a detailed engraved map of China, which is essentially duplicated in the final design of the Chinese Resistance stamp. Furthermore, the printing approach used by the American Bank Note Company employs an engraved frame with offset lithography for printing the colorful flags. Interestingly, this printing approach by the ABNC seems to provide a precursor to that used for the flag stamps of the 1943–44 Overrun Countries Series. Note that the Chinese in the bottom margin translate as “American Bank Note Company.”

By May 1942, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) was instructed to prepare designs for a “Free China” issue. A variety of materials from various sources were employed in this task, as shown by the BEP’s composite photograph in Figure 4. Here, portraits of Lincoln and Sun Yat-Sen flank a large impression of one of the Chinese map stamps of Figure 3. The Lincoln portrait is a BEP engraving by Marcus W. Balwin, while that of Sun Yat-Sen is after a half-tone portrait in one of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen’s own books.<sup>3</sup> Below this are various groupings of Chinese that translate as the slogan “Fight the War and Build the Country” and the famous Lincoln quotation, “Of the people, By the people, For the people.”



*Figure 4. Composite photograph produced by the BEP for Chinese Resistance stamp.<sup>1,3</sup>*

The first model for the Chinese Resistance stamp was submitted on May 28, 1942. This was rejected and other photoessays were submitted on June 11, 12, 16, and 18. The last one of these was approved by PMG Frank Walker on June 22, 1942. Example photoessays are shown in Figure 5, both incorporating the twelve-pointed “sun” symbol used on the Chinese flag.

As shown in the closeups in Figure 6, the map on the final stamp very closely mimics that on the 1939 Chinese stamps, showing China’s major rivers in white, including the Yellow, Yangtze, and Pearl Rivers (north to south) along with provincial boundaries as

dark lines. Note that the map in the Chinese Resistance stamp is simply labeled “China,” whereas the Chinese on the map at left translate as “Republic of China.”



Figure 5. Example photoessays for the Chinese Resistance stamp.<sup>1,3</sup>

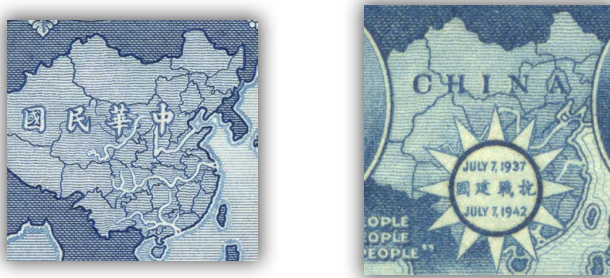


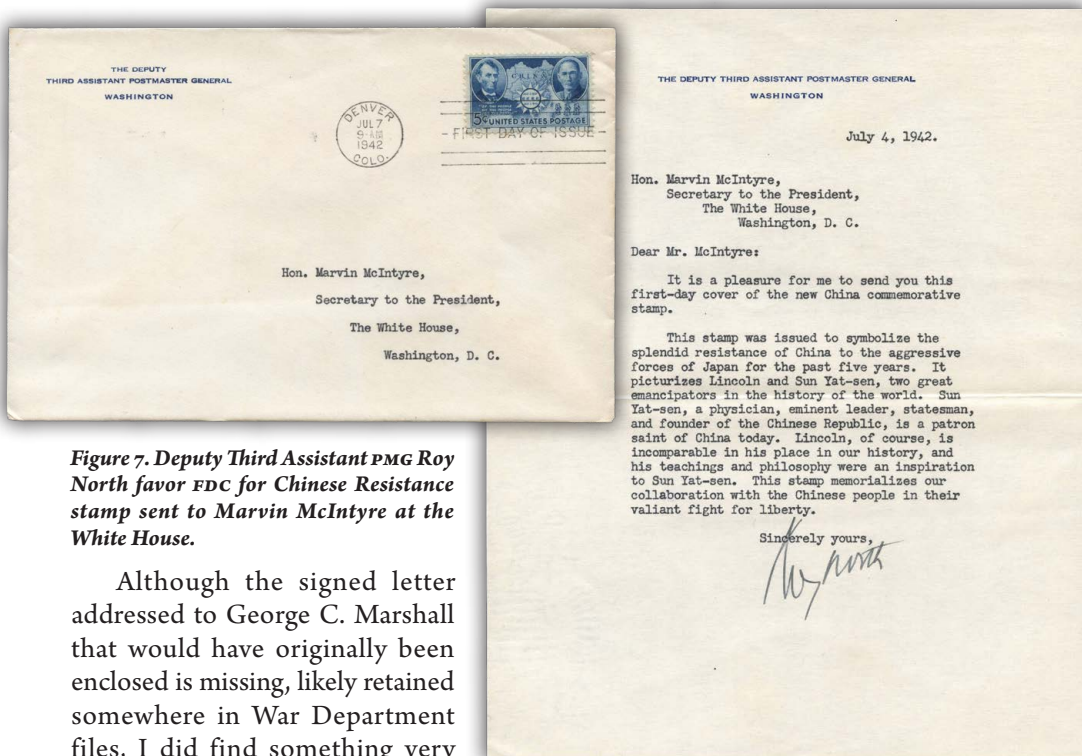
Figure 6. Closeups comparing maps on the 1939 stamps with the Chinese Resistance stamp.

The Lincoln portrait for the Chinese Resistance stamp was engraved by Leo C. Kaufmann with that for Sun Yat-Sen by Carl T. Arlt. The map on the die was engraved by Reuben K. Barrick, with the frame and lettering on the stamp by Axel W. Christensen. After the die was approved, three printing plates were prepared, although only two, numbers 22954 and 22955, were used with printing beginning on June 30, 1942.<sup>3</sup> The first day of issue was in Denver, Colorado, on July 7, 1942. This was one of the cities where Dr. Sun Yat-Sen had been in exile since before the 1911 revolution in China. In fact, he had first learned of the revolution while he was in Denver and returned to Shanghai in December, where he was elected provisional president by delegates meeting in Nanjing.

Favor first day covers (FDCs) for the Chinese Resistance stamp with signed letters were sent out by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy M. North. I'm fortunate to have examples of these sent to several prominent figures. My example with the signed letter sent to Marvin H. McIntyre at the White House is shown in Figure 7.

North also sent a favor FDC to General George C. Marshall at the War Department on July 7, 1942, seven months to the day after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor that brought the US into the Second World War. This was a fraught time during the war. The Japanese had swept through the Pacific, conquering Hong Kong, the Philippine Islands, and the Dutch East Indies in turn, with the Battle of Midway itself raging from June 4–7, 1942. On the other side of the world, a major German summer offensive was rapidly advancing across southern Russia in a bold attempt to seize the oil fields of the Caucasus, and Rommel was in Egypt, threatening the Suez Canal.





**Figure 7. Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North favor FDC for Chinese Resistance stamp sent to Marvin McIntyre at the White House.**

Although the signed letter addressed to George C. Marshall that would have originally been enclosed is missing, likely retained somewhere in War Department files, I did find something very interesting inside my cover. It is an intact Military Intelligence Service routing slip to General Marshall used by the War Department. Shown with the FDC in Figure 8, this reveals details of how military intelligence was organized within the War Department in mid-1942. There is a date of July 25 at the top in red pencil, suggesting that at this perilous time during World War II, the processing of this favor FDC to Marshall was delayed somewhat. Note the red routing arrow pointing to the "Secretary, General Staff" along with a lengthy list of potential recipients, including both the Intelligence and Counterintelligence Groups.

The choice of General George C. Marshall as the recipient of this favor FDC seems especially appropriate since the Chinese Resistance stamp is the first of FDR era stamps that commemorates resistance to aggression during World War II, including those of the Overrun Countries Series and the 1944 Philippines stamp. Marshall led much of the military planning during World War II, and later, the theme of post-war regeneration was practically embodied by Marshall, who as Truman's Secretary of State, led the massive US economic aid and political commitment to European recovery that became known as the Marshall Plan. In recognition of this work George C. Marshall was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953.

In Figure 9, I show my favor FDC for the Chinese Resistance stamp sent to FDR at the White House by the Deputy Third Assistant PMG. Again, this lacks the letter, suggesting that unlike favor FDCs sent to FDR at the White House by the Postmaster General, Roy North's letters were sometimes separated from the covers. Evidence for this in my collection includes eight favor FDCs from the Postmaster General, all with signed letters,

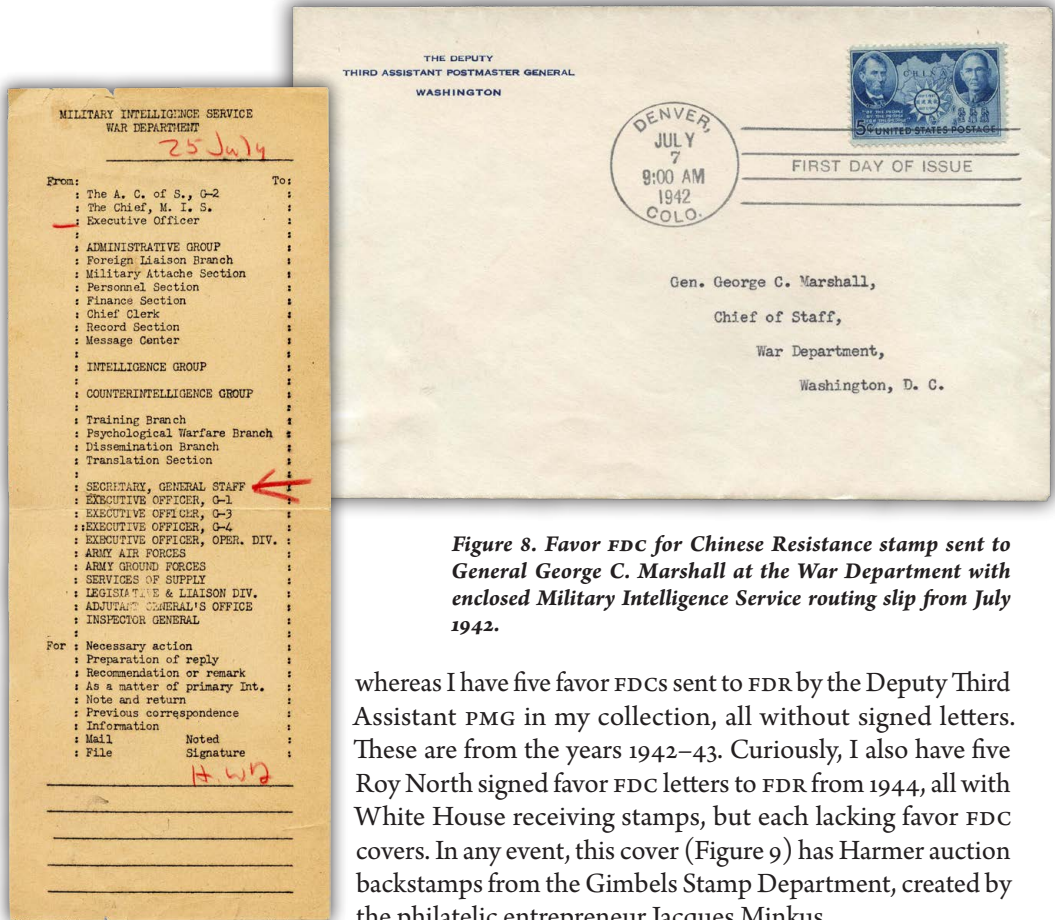


Figure 8. Favor FDC for Chinese Resistance stamp sent to General George C. Marshall at the War Department with enclosed Military Intelligence Service routing slip from July 1942.

whereas I have five favor FDCs sent to FDR by the Deputy Third Assistant PMG in my collection, all without signed letters. These are from the years 1942–43. Curiously, I also have five Roy North signed favor FDC letters to FDR from 1944, all with White House receiving stamps, but each lacking favor FDC covers. In any event, this cover (Figure 9) has Harmer auction backstamps from the Gimbels Stamp Department, created by the philatelic entrepreneur Jacques Minkus.

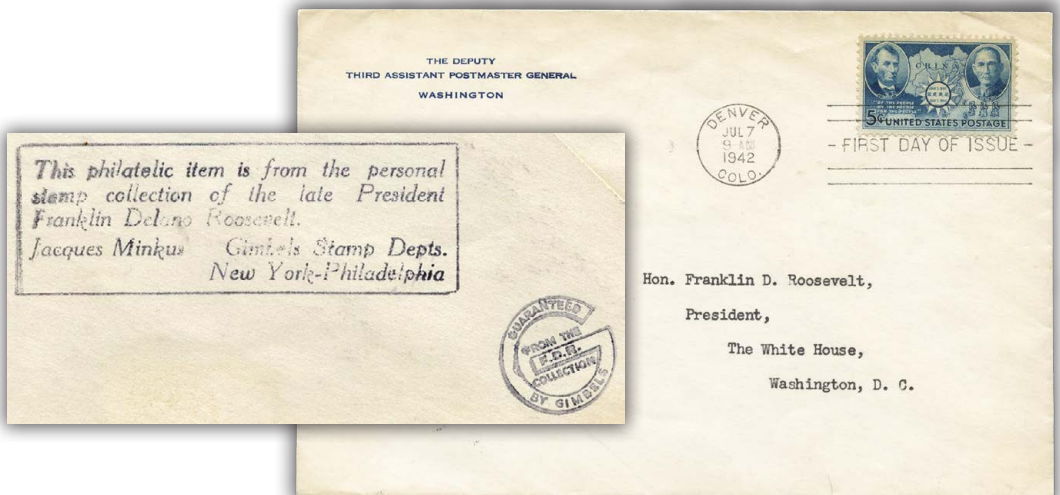
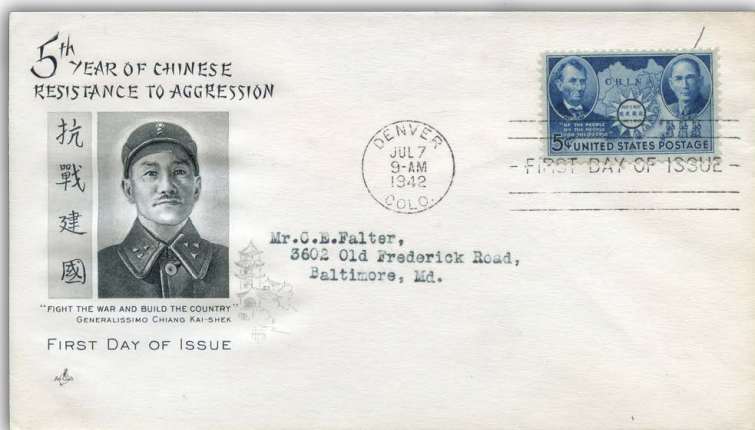


Figure 9. Favor FDC on official PMG stationery sent to FDR at the White House by Deputy Third Assistant PMG Roy North.



**Figure 10. PMG Walker (center) selling panes of the new Chinese Resistance stamps to FDR and the Chinese Foreign Minister, T. V. Soong.<sup>4</sup>**

There was also a brief ceremony at the White House, where Postmaster General Frank C. Walker sold panes of the new Chinese Resistance stamps to FDR and T. V. Soong, the Chinese Foreign Minister. This is shown in Figure 10. Note the black mourning band on FDR's left sleeve, as he was still observing the one-year mourning period for his mother, Sarah.<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 11. Artcraft FDC, showing portrait of Generalissimo Chang Kai-Shek.**

My example of an ordinary Artcraft FDC, whose cachet has a portrait of Generalissimo Chang Kai-Shek, is shown in Figure 11. Above are the words "5<sup>th</sup> year of Chinese resistance to aggression," with the Chinese to the left translating as the slogan "Fight the



War and Build the Country.” Note that Chinese can be properly written top to bottom, as well as left to right.

Wartime uses of the 5¢ China Resistance stamp do not appear to be common. Shown in Figure 12 is an unusual example from my collection. This is an airmail cover, posted at Marshall Pass, Colorado, on December 23, 1942. It is signed by Col. W. K. Baker, Postmaster, with a 1¢ National Defense stamp added to make up the 6¢ airmail rate. At an elevation of 10,845 feet, Marshall Pass was a tiny settlement with a post office and railroad station. Located at the top of the pass, it claimed to be the “World’s highest railroad post office.” In 1948, its population was only 11, and *Time Magazine* labeled it “the U.S.’s smallest post office.”



**Figure 12.** Airmail cover with China Resistance stamp posted at Marshall Pass, Colorado, on December 23, 1942.

Although in July 1942 the war had not been going well for the Chinese, it had at least reached a bloody stalemate. Initially, bitter fighting during the battle for Shanghai had lasted more than three months until early November 1937, when the Chinese defenders withdrew. The Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) then moved inland, capturing the Chinese capital of Nanjing in December, where they committed the large-scale war atrocities now known as the Nanjing Massacre. By 1938, the political leadership in Tokyo had hoped to limit the scope of the war to occupying much of northern China and the areas around Shanghai and Nanjing. However, Japanese Imperial Army commanders in China continued to escalate the conflict, and after suffering initial defeats, deployed nearly all of their available forces in attacking and capturing the city of Wuhan further inland. In the meantime, the Chinese had moved their provisional wartime capital to Chongqing, far up the Yangtze River. Responding to further offensives, in 1939–40, the Chinese launched a series of successful counterattacks that helped turn the Japanese invasion into a quagmire for the IJA, with extended supply lines and a resulting war of attrition.

In mid-1941, Japan’s primary wartime focus switched from China to the Pacific and Southeast Asia once oil embargos by the United States, Great Britain and the Dutch East Indies were put in place. This situation led to the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor and Japan’s whirlwind military campaign in the Pacific to capture the oil fields of the Dutch

East Indies. When the United States entered the war, strenuous efforts were made to provide lend-lease aid to China, but with the Japanese in control of the Chinese coastline, relatively little aid could be delivered. As a result, Japanese occupation forces remained in China until the end of World War II.

The Chinese Resistance stamp is among the more fascinating stamps of the FDR era. Issued in early July 1942 at the height of World War II, it seems to provide a precursor to later stamps commemorating resistance to Axis occupation, including the Japanese occupation of the Philippines.<sup>6</sup> It is especially noteworthy that these include the flag stamps of the 1943–44 Overrun Countries Series printed by the American Bank Note Company. These stamps employ an engraved outer frame with offset lithography for printing the colorful flags, strikingly similar to the method used for 1939 Chinese stamps (Figure 3) commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States Constitution.

Acknowledgment

The Author would like to thank Hugh Lawrence for his expert help with Chinese philately and translations.

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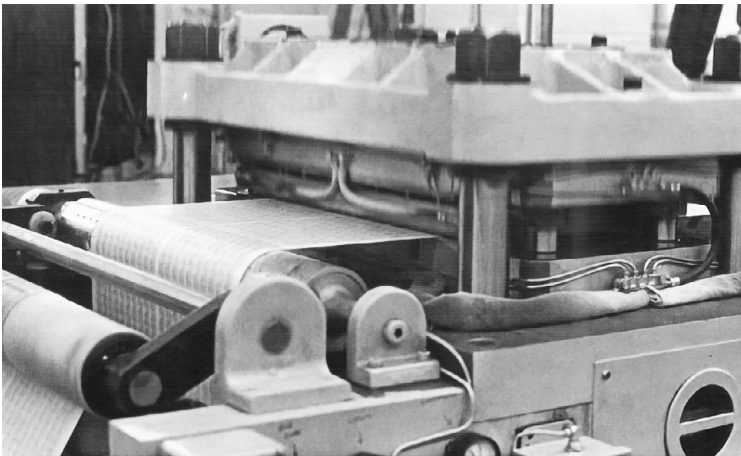


*The Great Americans*

## Great Americans Issue Part VI— The A Press Reconfigured Format

by Jay Stotts

USSS #10921 | ✉ stottsjd@swbell.net



*Figure 1. Eureka Perforating Machine. Courtesy of Linn's Stamp News and Amos Press Inc.*

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) had many bottlenecks in the production of postage stamps in 1985, but one of the most restrictive was probably the process of cutting rolls of printed stamps or sheets of 1600 stamps into sheets of 400 definitive-sized stamps before individually feeding the panes into the L perforator.

The Bureau understood that it needed to develop a new method of perforating sheets that would take a printed web of paper off the workhorse A Press and rapidly perforate the complete roll before it was cut into smaller panes of stamps or post office sheets.



## The Eureka Platen Perforator

By February 1985, the BEP was testing the first of five new free-standing perforators on rolls of Flag Over Capitol sheet formatted stamps (Scott 2114). The Eureka Security Printing Co. of Jessup, Pennsylvania, made the perforating machine.

As the roll of printed stamps passed under the punching platen, the roll stopped moving momentarily, and a vacuum of air pulled the paper tight against the female punch die. The male die descended and punched a harrow pattern of perforations in the roll, framing 200 definitive stamps (two side-by-side panes of 100 subjects). The vacuum pulled the perforation chads and any accompanying dust away.

After the pause for punching, the platen was raised, the roll of paper was indexed forward, and the process was repeated for the next group of 200 stamps. The machine perforated 300 linear feet of the roll of stamps per minute.

Figure 1 illustrates the perforating platen. The photo was originally published on page 131 of *Linn's U.S. Stamp Yearbook 1985*, in which author Fred Boughner discussed the Flag Over Capitol sheet stamp.

The delivery schedule called for delivery of the second Eureka machine to the Bureau by April, with two more due in May and the final machine due to arrive by the end of the summer.

## Sheet Reformating

Because the Eureka perforator punched perforations for 200 stamps each time the platen descended, the roll needed margins around each punched pattern to allow space for indexing. The old format of printing stamps continually with floating marginal markings from the A Press had to change. Figure 2 shows a schematic of the old printing layout featuring floating marginal markings for half of a drum rotation. With every rotation of the A Press's drum, a pattern of 920 stamps (46 stamps wrapped length-wise around the circumference by 20 stamps wide) was printed. There were side margins but no top or bottom margins, just a continual long roll of stamps printed end-to-end.

The Bureau reformatted the printing layout by adding a center margin between the left and right columns of 10 stamps and top and bottom margins. The new layout is shown schematically

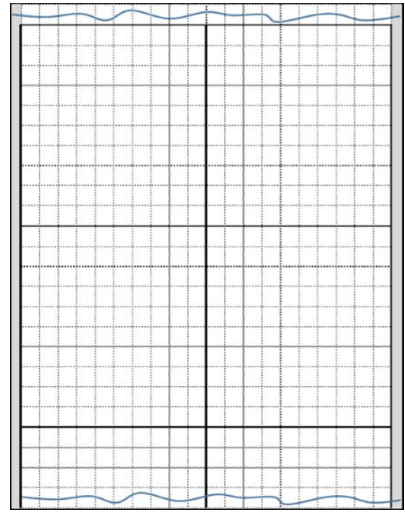


Figure 2. A schematic of the A Press floating marginal markings layout representing half of one printing drum revolution.

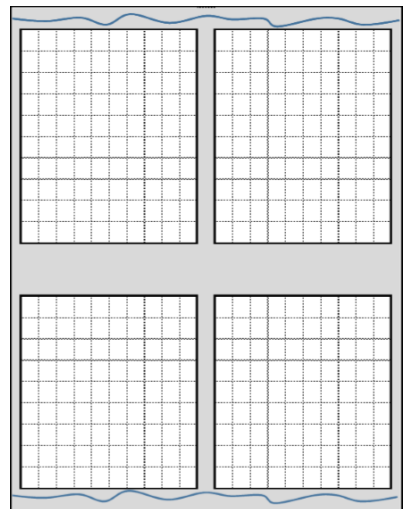


Figure 3. A schematic of the A Press new layout representing half of one printing drum revolution.

in Figure 3 for half of a drum rotation. Now, a single revolution of the A Press printing drum printed 800 stamp images in eight panes of 100 subjects that were surrounded by stamp margins. Later, these eight panes would be separated into individual post office panes of stamps.

### The 1986 Issues



*Figure 4. The four new people featured on 1986 GA issues.*

Great Americans started appearing in 1986 with the new layout format. The first of the series to be issued in 1986 was a 25¢ stamp honoring Jack London, an author of novels and a journalist and activist.

William Jennings Bryan, a politician and three-time nominee as the Democratic candidate for President of the United States, appeared on March 19, 1986, as a \$2 value. John Harvard, a colonial clergyman, benefactor and co-founder of Harvard University, appeared on a 56¢ stamp, a rate that paid the triple weight domestic letter rate when the stamp was issued on September 3.

Twenty days later, on September 23, a \$1 stamp picturing Bernard Revel, a rabbi, scholar, and educator, was issued. Figure 4 shows the four new personages released on Great Americans stamps in 1986.

By November 1985, the Cottrell presses had all been retired, so there would be no more opportunities to take the old, lower-value GA Cottrell press plates back to the press for another run. The backlog of persons that the postal service intended to honor on forthcoming stamps was growing as well, so in 1986, several new persons were included on the new A Press layout formats, specifically replacing former Cottrell press values.

Starting with a February 27 issue, a 5¢ stamp featuring former Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black replaced the Pearl Buck Cottrell press issue. On June 18, a stamp featuring Belva Ann Lockwood, an attorney and suffragette, replaced the Rachel Carson stamp on a 17¢ stamp to pay the fee for the second ounce of a domestic letter.



Figure 5. The four 1986 issues that replaced Cottrell press issues.

Father Flanagan, founder of Boys Town, was honored on a new 4¢ stamp issued on July 14. This stamp replaced the 4¢ Carl Shurz issue. A new 3¢ stamp picturing cardiologist Paul Dudley White was released on September 15. Figure 5 shows the four 1986 replacement stamps for former Cottrell press issues.

Two more 1986 GA issues were released in the new A Press format. Margaret Mitchell, a novelist, journalist, and author of *Gone with the Wind*, was placed on a 1¢ stamp issued on June 30, replacing the Dortha Dix value. The



Figure 6. The Margaret Mitchell stamp.



Figure 7. The Chester Nimitz stamp from the A Press.

Dix stamp was a former A Press product, but the floating markings layout was incompatible with the Eureka perforator, so Mitchell was selected for the replacement value. Figure 6 shows the Mitchell stamp.

The second stamp was the 50¢ value. Although the United States Postal Service (USPS) could have easily elected to replace Chester Nimitz, the subject of the previous year's I-8 currency press 50¢ printing, they kept him as the subject of the new A Press format printings. Because Nimitz was not a "new



stamp” in the eyes of the USPS, there was no official release date for the new stamp. The collecting community has reported that the new version was placed on sale on August 25, 1986, in Washington, DC.

Three significant characteristics set the I-8 and A Press printings apart. The I-8 currency press characteristics were overall tagging, shiny gum, and mismatched perforations at the stamp’s corners. The A Press features were large block tagging, dull gum and bullseye matched corner perforations.

The Scott *Specialized Catalog*, already with a listing under number 1869 for the I-8 currency press variety, chose to list the new Nimitz stamp as a minor variety, assigning Scott number 1869a. Figure 7 shows the 50¢ Nimitz value printed from the A Press.

### The 1987 Issues

The GA series continued to grow, with six new additions in 1987, which added to the new A Press format production history. All six issues represented replacement values formerly issued but now rendered useless by the Eureka perforator technology.



Figure 8. The three 1987 issues with new subjects

On February 12, an issue honoring Julia Ward Howe, an abolitionist and social advocate, replaced the 14¢ Sinclair Lewis stamp for paying the domestic card rate. The Lewis stamp was an A Press printing with floating marginal markings.

About two weeks later, on February 28, Mary Lyon, an educator and advocate for women’s education, was pictured on a 2¢ stamp. She replaced the Stravinsky stamp from the Cottrell press printings.

On August 15, a new 10¢ stamp featuring Native American leader Red Cloud was issued. He replaced the Richard Russell stamp, also an A Press product with floating marginal markings. Figure 8. shows the three 1987 releases with new subjects.

The other three new 1987 issues were all repeats of the subject matter but issued in the new A Press format required for compatibility with the Eureka perforator. Because the USPS did not regard these stamps as new issues, there were no specific first day of





**Figure 9.** *The three reformatted 1987 issues*

issue ceremonies and therefore, issue dates aren't currently identified. The three new formats occurred for the 22¢ James Audubon, 39¢ Grenville Clark and 40¢ Lillian Gilbreth stamps, illustrated in Figure 9. As with the Nimitz stamp, Scott assigned minor numbers to each of these new formats beneath the former A Press floating format numbers.

### The 1988 Issues

Six issues from 1988 fit the A Press printing format. One value, the 15¢ Buffalo Bill Cody, will be discussed in a later chapter because of the order of the release of different formats of this value, although one of them was an A Press issue released in 1988.

Effective April 3, 1988, a postal rate increase raised the domestic letter rate from 22¢ to 25¢ for the first ounce of a domestic letter. The Jack London stamp saw increased demand after this rate change. The cost of the second ounce rose from 17¢ to 20¢, and the post card rate increased to 15¢.



**Figure 10.** *The four new designs of 1988.*

Four of these stamps featured new subjects. A 45¢ stamp featuring Dr. Harvey Cushing, a neurosurgeon, was issued on June 17 and paid the double weight domestic letter rate. Chester Carlson, the inventor of xerography, was pictured on a 21¢ stamp issued on October 21. This rate paid the card rate to Mexico and Canada.

Artist Mary Cassatt was honored on a 23¢ stamp issued on November 4. On the following day, November 5, a 65¢ Hap Arnold stamp was issued to pay the triple-weight domestic letter rate. Arnold was a significant U.S. military leader in the twentieth century. The four new designs released in 1988 are shown in Figure 10.



*Figure 11. The two 1988 reformatted issues.*

Two 1988 issues were reconfigured from the former A Press floating markings format to comply with the Eureka perforators. Again, because the USPS did not consider them “new issues,” no formal release dates are identified. The 20¢ Harry Truman stamp was reformatted and was a useful value to pay the second-ounce domestic letter rate. The 30¢ Frank C. Laubach stamp paid the letter rate to Canada. These two issues are pictured in Figure 11.

### **The 1989 Issue**

One more issue from 1989 fits into the context of this chapter, the 28¢ Sitting Bull stamp issued on September 14, 1989. Sitting Bull was a Lakota Sioux Holy Man and Native American leader. The rate paid the Universal Postal Union surface card rate. This stamp is illustrated in Figure 12.

### **Marginal Markings**

Other than Electric Eye markings being replaced by Crow’s Feet markings, the new A Press format resembled the Cottrell Press markings. Sleeve numbers were located so they



*Figure 12. Sitting Bull stamp issued in 1989.*

were printed once for each pane of 100 subjects and in all four corners for sheets of 400 subjects. Several of the previous illustrations have shown blocks of four illustrating the sleeve number location. The new A Press layout undoubtedly had to please stamp collectors because it brought an end to the period of collecting floating plate blocks in strips of 20 or in plate blocks of six.



**Figure 13.** Plate numbers read upright when the web was viewed from the left side of the press.

The sleeve numbers in both margins were arranged so that as a printed web traveled on the press, the numbers could be read from the left side of the machine. Figure 13 illustrates the point.

Copyright and ZIP Code markings held the same locations that they had on Cottrell press plates. Each appeared once per pane of 100 stamps and in the four opposite corners in an uncut sheet of 400 subjects. As with the sleeve numbers, they were arranged to read upright from the left side of the press. These markings are shown in Figure 14.



**Figure 14.** Copyright and ZIP Code markings.



Hurleton markings, commonly called Crow's Feet, were in both the left and right margins near the lower sleeve numbers in an uncut sheet of 400 stamps. These markings are shown in Figures 15 and 16. They were used to help guide the electric eyes on the Eureka perforating machine.



Figure 15. Crow's Feet marking, left pane.



Figure 16. Crow's Feet marking, right pane.

Short horizontal dashes were also engraved into the printing sleeves as guides for the Eureka perforator. Two examples are shown in Figure 17. Their purpose is not clear to collectors. They may have played a role in the downstream functions of the machine after perforating. After perforating, the machine had a rotating cylinder with a knife edge, which cut the roll into panes of 400 subjects. Electric eyes read the selva markings and the perforation holes to separate good sheets from defective sheets.



Figure 17. Short horizontal dashes—guides for the Eureka perforator.





**Figure 18.** *Perforations stop short of the top, bottom and inside selvage.*

The gauge of the perforator has been reported as both 11.1 and 11.2. The Scott *Specialized Catalogue* lists the gauge as 11.2.

### Block Tagging

Part IV of the series explained the difference between small and large block tagging. The large block tagging was a 19 x 21 millimeter rectangle of phosphor printed on top of the stamp image at an offset station on the press. These are typically invisible to the naked eye. The purpose of the tagging was to help the mail sorting machines determine which of the eight corners on an envelope contained the postage.

All of the issues discussed in this chapter were tagged with large block overprints. Figure 19. shows a representative example of the large block tag. The rubber printing mats used to print large block tags deteriorated over time, so under ultraviolet

### Additional Perforation Details

Although we have already explained most of the details of the Eureka perforator, a couple of minor details are left to discuss. As is probably already obvious by the harrow-type platen, which perforated both the vertical and horizontal perforation for a group of 200 stamps in a single punch operation, the pattern produced a perfect intersection of bullseye perforations at each of the corners of every stamp. Most of the illustrations in this chapter document this point.

The perforating pattern for a pane of 100 stamps continued to the outside border of the pane but did not go beyond the top or bottom rows of stamps and did not cross the center margin of the pattern of 200 stamps being punched. Figure 18. shows an inside corner block where the perforations stop at the bottom row and do not continue into the center margin.



**Figure 19.** *Representative illustration of large block tagging.*

| Scott Listed Tagging Omitted Varieties |        |           |               |
|----------------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------|
| Scott No.                              | Value  | Vignette  | Cat. Value    |
| 2168a                                  | 1¢     | Mitchell  | \$15.00 mint  |
| 2169b                                  | 2¢     | Lyon      | —             |
| 2170b                                  | 3¢     | White     | \$75.00 mint  |
| 2171c                                  | 4¢     | Flanagan  | —             |
| 2172a                                  | 5¢     | Black     | \$150.00 mint |
| 2175b                                  | 10¢    | Red Cloud | \$25.00 mint  |
| 2176a                                  | 14¢    | Howe      | —             |
| 2178a                                  | 17¢    | Lockwood  | \$15.00 mint  |
| 1862c                                  | 20¢    | Truman    | \$10.00 mint  |
| 2180a                                  | 21¢    | Carlson   | —             |
| 1863c                                  | 22¢    | Audubon   | \$17.50 mint  |
| 2181d                                  | 23¢    | Cassat    | \$7.50 mint   |
| 2182b                                  | 25¢    | London    | —             |
| 1864c                                  | 30¢    | Laubach   | \$225.00 mint |
| 2188b                                  | 45¢    | Cushing   | \$17.50 mint  |
| 2190a                                  | 56¢    | Harvard   | —             |
| 2191                                   | 65¢    | Arnold    | \$22.50 mint  |
| 2193b                                  | \$1.00 | Revel     | \$75.00 used  |
| 2195a                                  | \$2.00 | Jennings  | \$300.00 mint |
|                                        |        |           | \$100.00 used |

Table 1.

2023 *Specialized Catalogue*. Several cautions come with this listing. First, not a single speck of phosphor can be detected on a tagging omitted stamp to be certified as this type of error. Second, in subsequent printings, tagging was intentionally eliminated for values of 9¢ and below, so collectors must make sure they clearly understand the difference for lower values between “tagging omitted” and “intentionally untagged” issues. Third, the tagging omitted listing in Scott is not clear for some listings that occurred as both A Press floating markings formats and A Press reformatted stamps, such as the 22¢ Audubon or 30¢ Laubach issues. Is the tagging omitted variety under these listings for the Eureka or L perforated stamp?

Revel’s Secret Mark

Many stamps have interesting stories from behind the scenes, and here is one that adds to the interest in the Great Americans:

When Bureau of Engraving and Printing engraver Kenneth Kipperman produced the original die for the \$1 Bernard Revel stamp, he added a feature that was not in the original design of the stamp. He engraved a six-pointed Star of David at the junction

light shortwave examination, some stamps may appear to be tagged with smaller, irregularly shaped phosphor patches.

At some time, it seems that the Bureau expanded the tag size to about 20 x 24 millimeters. The Scott *Specialized Catalogue* notes such a size under the 50¢ Nimitz listing (Scott 1869f). Under the Nimitz listing, it refers to the 19 x 21 tag as a “medium block tag.” All of the other 2023 Scott *Specialized Catalogue* listings continue to refer to the 19 x 21 tagging as a large block tag, so there is more to the story of the 20 x 24 tag that is yet to be reported.

As with the previous issues, tagging was completely omitted during some printing operations. These are listed as “tagging omitted” errors in the catalog. Table 1 summarizes “tagging omitted” errors for the printings discussed in this chapter. Values are from the

Figure 20. Location and enlargement of the “secret mark.”



between Revel’s mustache and his Beard. Figure 20 shows the location and an enlargement of what is now referred to as a secret mark.

The discovery of Kipperman’s secret mark led to an official BEP examination of all stamp dies created within the ten year period, looking for other secret marks. The USPS decided not to immediately replace the Revel stamp because they viewed the mark as neither offensive nor in poor taste. About three years later, Revel was replaced with another \$1 Great Americans issue.

Mitchell’s Fading Image

Shortly after this group of stamps was available at post offices nationwide, one Great Americans student and researcher, Richie Shulman, noticed that among the printings from sleeve 1 of the 1¢ Martha Mitchell stamps, there was a great discrepancy in the impression values of the stamp. Super sleuth George Brett took on the challenge of investigating the cause of the discrepancy and wrote two articles on the subject. Readers who wish to delve further into the subject are referred to Brett’s article, “Analysis of the 1¢ Margaret Mitchell Light Print,” pp. 387–91 of the July 1991, *The United States Specialist* and his follow-up article, “1¢ Mitchell Light Print, #2188,” pp. 207–09 of the April 1992, *The United States Specialist*.

Figure 21. shows two blocks of the same position from sleeve 1 of the Mitchell stamp, illustrating what Shulman noticed. One is a dark



Figure 21. Dark and light impressions of the Mitchell stamp.

| 1¢ Martha Mitchell Printing History |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Date to Press                       | Impressions |
| June 17, 1986                       | 306,900     |
| July 10, 1986                       | 426,000     |
| March 17, 1988                      | 550,000     |
| April 25, 1988                      | 123,500     |

Table 2.



print and the other appears to be a much lighter print. Brett provided a printing history of sleeve 1 in his second article, and the data is shown in Table 2. Brett concluded that there was a component of sleeve wear involved and that, toward the end of the sleeve's life, the press impression pressure was slackened a bit to stretch the life of the sleeve.

### Summary of the Reformatted A Press Issues

This chapter introduced 23 new stamps within the series, 17 of which featured new subjects and six of which were reformatted former releases. Five of those issues were formerly A Press floating markings issues and one, the 50¢ Nimitz, was an I-8 currency printing.

Of the 23 issues, we'll reencounter ten of them as new formats, but 13 met the end of the line with this group: 1¢ Mitchell, 5¢ Black, 14¢ Howe, 17¢ Lockwood, 21¢ Carlson, 22¢ Audubon, 28¢ Sitting Bull, 39¢ Clark, 40¢ Gilbreth, 56¢ Harvard, 65¢ Arnold, \$1 Revel and \$2 Jennings.

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by **Rodney A. Juell**

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This month's photo is a scene inside the Durant, Mississippi, post office, where the postmaster and his assistant are busy postmarking covers sent in by collectors for transport on the first trip, on June 1, 1949, of the Columbus & Durant Highway Post Office (HPO). Postmaster Williams reported receiving covers from every state and five foreign countries. The HPO service established on June 1, 1949, lasted until March 26, 1965. Shown nearby is a first trip cover from the Columbus & Durant HPO.









*The Fourth Bureau Issue*

## The Unprecanceled Scott 581 1¢ Rotary Sheet Stamp EDU is Fraudulent, Part I

by **James Robinson and Jay Stotts**

USSS # 12386 and # 10921 | ✉ [jsr.new2019@gmail.com](mailto:jsr.new2019@gmail.com); [stottsjd@swbell.net](mailto:stottsjd@swbell.net)



**Figure 1.** Can you spot the problem? (Scan of a 2002 non-digital expert certification photo, APEX cert #143410; Photo courtesy APEX.)

For 74 years, the accepted first day of issue for unprecanceled Scott 581, the Fourth Bureau Issue (FBI) 1¢ rotary sheet perf. 10, was October 17, 1923. However, in 1997, the discovery of an apparent May 18, 1923, earliest documented use (EDU) for the issue was published.<sup>1</sup> The item's sudden existence stood in glaring contradiction to the official Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) documentary narrative regarding the experimental development of Stickney rotary-press sheet-stamp production between 1922 and 1924 (we will examine that chronology in Part II of this article).

This article offers a new resolution to the puzzle. The evidence presented herein demonstrates that the cover is fraudulent. This analysis outlines and examines the physical evidence, history and provenance of the item.

## Section I. Can You Spot the Problem?

Figure 1 illustrates a scan of the photograph from the September 24, 2002, expert certificate #143410 issued by The American Philatelic Expertizing Service (APEX) for the May 18, 1923, 581 EDU. Per Ken Martin, the current APEX Expertizing Director, the analog photo was taken about a year before the expertizing service began using digital photography.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, the photo is the highest-clarity image appearing in the philatelic record to date.

The certificate text reads: "United States, Scott No. 581, used on earliest documented cover, folded mailing card, 5/18/1923, genuine in all respects."

In his correspondence with the authors, Martin explained that the item was examined by only one expert. He also provided an intriguing notation made by the examiner, which was within the expertizing background documents: "I'm troubled by this one but I can't find anything wrong."<sup>3</sup>



Figure 2. Scott 581 ship menu "Private Mailing Card" EDU, (photo courtesy Matthew Bennett International. Lot #1054, New York City Public Auction #282, November 13, 2004) showing outside (left) detail (bottom center) and inside (right).

## Section II. Is it Genuine? “Something is Wrong Here.”

In this section, an illustrated analytical study of the Scott 581 EDU “Ship Menu Private Mailing Card” will demonstrate that this item was fraudulently created, probably with the intent to present it as the EDU. This study focuses on various aspects of the cancel lines on the stamp relative to the cancel lines on the menu. The purpose is to prove three facts:

1. The current stamp is not original to the menu.
2. A different stamp was on the menu at the time the cancelation was applied. This original stamp was either removed or had fallen off. (Note that the correct postage rate for this handwritten and oversized card matter was the 2¢ first-class letter rate).<sup>4</sup>
3. The unprecanceled stamp on the menu was applied inexpertly to the canceled menu later.

For better reference and understanding regarding the item’s intended usage, Figure 2 illustrates the entire fold-out message card and the colorfully illustrated menu side as it was listed in the 2004 Matthew Bennett International auction of *The Pioneer Collection of 1922–35 Issue First Day Covers*.<sup>5</sup> The catalog image is believed to be the only photograph of the item to appear in the philatelic press to date, and the majority of collectors have never seen the item. Its relative obscurity was a major factor in the time it has taken to question the item’s legitimacy.

**Study Steps:** The cancel on the menu is a Columbia 7-Line “wavy-line” machine cancel as identified by R. F. Hanmer in *U.S. Machine Postmarks 1871–1925*, Second Edition (See Figure 3).<sup>6</sup>

To generate comparative digital overlays for this study, a well-struck example of a genuine Columbia 7-line wavy-line cancel contemporary to the period was used as a fixed reference or “control” cancel (see Figure 4).

The control cover is franked with a 2¢ Washington-Franklin stamp, also contemporary to the era, and the circular date stamp (CDS) dial in the Columbia cancellation is dated June 4, 1920. Via mathematical equations, a yellow overlay of the entire control cancel was digitally generated, including the circular dial which allows accurate sizing and spacing reference.

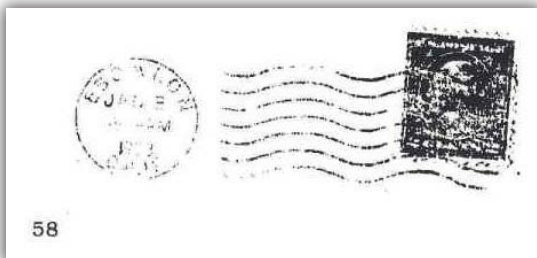
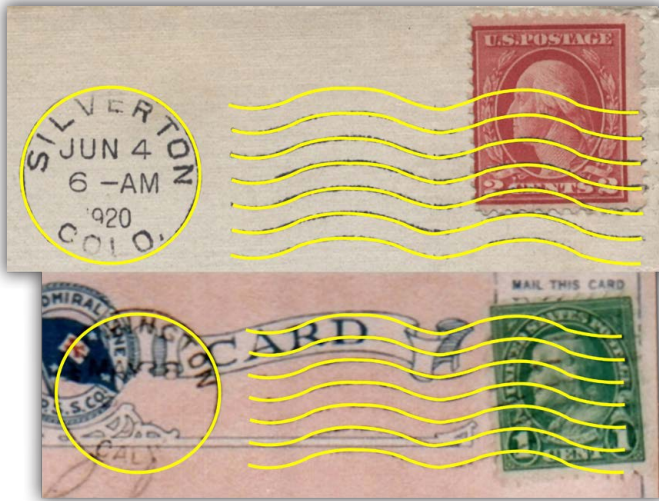


Figure 3. Columbia 7-line wavy-line cancel, reference identification, cancel dated 1923 (Courtesy R.F. Hanmer, 1984).



Figure 4. The “control cancel.” Columbia 7-Line dated 1920.





*Study Image 1. Problem #1; the stamp cancel does not align with the menu cancel.*

### **Step One**

Study Image 1 shows closeups of the control and the menu cancels onto which the yellow, digitally-produced, Columbia 7-line wavy-line cancel was placed. The CDS dial was used as a fixed reference to maintain accurate sizing of the entire cancel.

Conclusions from Study 1 Image:

- The yellow control overlay shows excellent alignment with the control cancel.
- The black wavy cancel lines and CDS dial on the menu align with the yellow control overlay.
- The black wavy cancel lines on the 1¢ stamp affixed to the menu do not align with the yellow overlay.
- In addition, the black lines on the stamp extend to the right beyond the point where the yellow overlay lines terminate.

### **Step Two**

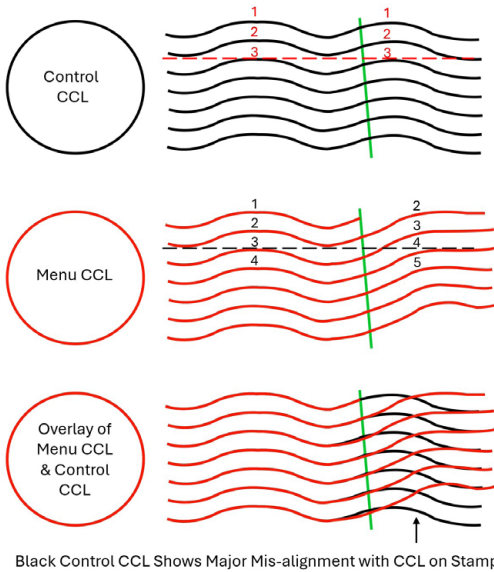
Study Image 2 is created using two overlays. One is the original yellow control cancel (now in black), and the second is a new overlay generated from the EDU item's markings (red). The left-leaning, green diagonal line in the three diagrams indicates the left-hand edge of the menu stamp's current location, determining the "break" where the stamp cancel markings meet the menu cancel markings.

With a machine-applied steel cancel device, consistent curvatures and uniformity of alignments are expected. The topmost diagram illustrates the control cancel overlay in black. Numbered horizontal lines were added to show the "level wave crests" and "level wave troughs" characteristic of the cancel type.

The middle diagram shows the new overlay created from the menu cancel markings in red.

The extent of misalignment within the subject item markings (red wavy lines) is severe. Note that when numbered horizontal lines are added, the wave crests are approximately one entire wave out of alignment. That is, the crest of wave "3" on the menu





**Study Image 2. Analysis of wave misalignments.**  
(Overlays courtesy Cristina Robinson, PhD.).

control cancel in black. The red “subject item markings” diagram is then overlaid onto the black control. Note how the green diagonal line (the current stamp location) almost perfectly indicates all points where the excellent alignment of the control and menu lines suddenly distorts and flies off high and extends too far to the right.

**Conclusion from Study 2 Image:** The stamp on the menu is located incorrectly for it to have received the same continuing cancel waves that were applied to the menu when the machine cancel was applied. Therefore, if the stamp was original to the menu, its location at the time of canceling was different.

### Step Three

A stamp can fall off a cover and require reattachment. When “fitting” a loose used stamp with wavy lines to a wavy line cancel on a cover, the curvature geometry of the waves on the cover forces the location of the stamp. Using a digital photographic overlay image of the 1¢ stamp on the menu, study image three shows where a “perfect fit” of the stamp to the menu cancel would require the stamp to be located. The stamp is now tilted 11.7 degrees to the right instead of the leftward tilt of its current location on the menu. As the study image demonstrates, it must also be placed slightly lower on the menu relative to the menu cancel.

Note that the stamp also could be in a second position horizontally, over one inch to the left of the position shown in Study Image 3. At that location, the stamp would align with the left-hand waves of the menu cancel rather than the right-hand waves. Only these two possible locations will suit the curvature alignment. In the second (left-hand) position, the stamp would be placed very close to the CDs dial, completely missing the preprinted space on the menu for postage, where the stamp was intended to be applied.

aligns with the crest of wave “4” on the stamp. This type of misalignment is impossible to create when using a rigid steel manufactured cancellation device.

The effect seen in the middle diagram is due to tilting an already canceled stamp in the leftward direction to align the markings on the stamp with the markings on the menu. The tilt of the stamp raised the wave crests on the stamp above the level of the waves on the menu. The fact that only six lines appear on the stamp versus the standard seven on the menu adds to the illusion that the stamp was properly placed. Without the aid of digital technology, the differences are difficult to spot.

Creation of the bottom diagram in Study Image 2 begins with the control



*Study Image 3. Determining a “perfect fit.”*

Conclusions from Study Image 3:

- If the stamp was on the cover correctly when the cover was canceled, then afterward, the stamp must have been removed or fallen off and was subsequently inexpertly reattached in the wrong location. In other words, the stamp was not in its current position when the cover was canceled. Legitimacy as a certifiable EDU is, therefore, already called into question.
- If the stamp was original to the cover, geometry demands that it was originally tilted 11.7 degrees to the right relative to its current position, and the location is in one of two revised locations.

#### **Step Four**

Study image 4 shows the yellow control cancel overlaid on the digitally fitted stamp in its theoretical location.

Conclusion from Study Image 4: The overlays further verify the “corrected fit.” Using only the cancel geometry as verification, this revised position and tilt of the stamp could have been its original position on the cover.

However, adding a secondary verification method developed in Step 5 will show that this revised location is impossible.



*Study Image 4. Verifying the corrected fit.*

### Step Five

Study Image 5 shows the stamp in the same theoretical location as in Step Four, but now as a 50% transparent overlay allowing a view beneath. This last step is the “nail in the coffin,” disproving the suggestion that the stamp might have been original but fell off the cover. If the stamp was original to the cover in this geometrically correct location at the time of cancellation, then cancel lines on the menu would not show beneath the transparency image. Clearly, however, they extend beneath, an impossible situation if the stamp had been affixed to the menu at the time the cover was canceled.



**Study Image 5.** A disproof of the argument, “Well, maybe it was the original stamp, but it fell off and was inexpertly re-attached.”

Likewise, readers can imagine the worst situation if the stamp was in the second potential location far to the left (not shown). In that case, the wavy lines on the menu would extend completely underneath the stamp location. Again, the stamp would have received the cancellation marking, not the cover, if the stamp was original to the menu. Thus, the wavy cancel lines on the menu are shown to cross under both possible theoretical locations of the stamp. It is impossible for the stamp to have been affixed in either allowable location when the menu was originally canceled.

Conclusion from Study Image 5: The stamp could not have been located in either of the only two geometrically permitted positions when the menu was canceled by the machine. The stamp currently on the menu was canceled while affixed to a different cover and was later attached to the menu. That is, the stamp is not original to the menu. It is a fraudulent later addition, likely added to deceive about the date of use.

In part II of this article, we will consider how we got to this point, what prompted and allowed the deception, and propose revisions to the *Scott Specialized Catalog*.

### References

1. Griffith, Gary, *United States Stamps 1922-26*, Linn's Stamp News, Amos Press, Sidney, OH, 1997, p. 153.
2. Martin, Ken, American Philatelic Expertizing Service (APEX) Director, in email correspondence with the authors of this article April 15, 2024.
3. Ref. 2.
4. *United States Official Postal Guide*, Series 4, Volume 3, No 1. Annual Edition, July, 1923. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 1923, pp 8 -section 8f; 9 -section 13.
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From the Washington-Franklin Head Committee

## Why Collect the Washington-Franklin Heads?

by Larry S. Weiss

USSS # 8558 | ✉ alantiques@att.net



*Figure 1. An accumulation of over 11,000 two-cent Washington-Franklin heads, providing ample material to study the basics of the issue, sort out interesting varieties and simply spend hours of relaxing examination and sorting time. Some call the Washington-Franklin heads the “head-ache” issues; I see them as “head-pleasers.”*

The greater the challenge presented by a stamp series the more it attracts me.

As my interest in US stamp collecting progressed backwards through the issues, I finally met in the complexity of the Washington-Franklin head series a subject requiring some significant study and learning. The series was first issued in 1908 and was current until 1925, ranging from Scott 331 to 547 and including the Shanghai overprints Scott K1 to K18.

With some 250 major varieties and many minor varieties, postal rate changes, errors, freaks and oddities, this series clearly presented an intellectual challenge. As I delved into the series, I found many other philatelists and dealers had not read the available

literature and often did not know the basics of the issue presented in Scott catalogs, leaving opportunity for those who acquired detailed knowledge about this series.

Becoming a serious student of the series so as to acquire a deep working understanding of its complexities and subtleties has always proven to be of great benefit in finding goodies and rarities among the common items, both in dealers stocks and in low value accumulations. I admit to enjoying occasionally making financially advantageous purchases, as I expect many others also would.

Another factor attracting me to the series was the availability of low cost, large accumulations of used stamps of the series (see Figure 1), allowing me to develop the observational skills to recognize varieties and form mini-studies of everything from watermark orientations, color variations (Figure 2), paper details, cancels (Figure 3), bulls-eye dated cancels (Figure 4), state cancels (Figure 5), plate varieties, printing freaks, perfins, precancels and more. I today still enjoy such studies despite having disposed of my main collection.



*Figure 2. A few examples from a color variation study.*

I grew up in an era when I was forever mindful of the words in President John F. Kennedy's "Moon Speech" of September 12, 1962, regarding the goal of a manned landing on the moon and a safe return within the decade:

We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things not because they are easy, but because they are hard. Because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we're willing to accept.

The program to accomplish that was Apollo and my early engineering career work touched on the project, designing a valve used on the astronauts' spacesuit. Applying the same challenge to my stamp collecting inspired the interest in specializing in a series with significant challenges—a decision I never regretted (but could not nearly complete in a decade!).

Discoveries, some major, are still being made among the Washington-Franklin heads despite the 100 years since the series was last current. For example, I found the existence of a different "USPS" double-line watermark pattern, a "forward-stepping" pattern unlike the "backward-stepping" well-known, catalogued watermark.<sup>1</sup> About 100 articles containing new information about the series have been published in *The Specialist* since the Washington-Franklin Head Issues Committee was established in 1984.



*Figure 3. A few of the many types of cancels.*

To read a more complete presentation on the advantages of collecting the Washington-Franklin heads with 200 examples of the diversity of material that may be found, visit the presentation that began in the November 2008 *Specialist*<sup>2</sup> on the anniversary of the start of the series.



*Figure 4. Stamps cancelled with the complete date appearing, a key part of 'socked-on-the-nose' or 'bullseye' cancels, may be collected to form a full year calendar. You may think February 29th is the rarest of these, but my experience found other winter dates were often just as challenging to find.*

What new discoveries are yet to be made? I do not know, but I am confident there are many awaiting those who study these stamps. Joining the USSS Washington-Franklin Head Issues Committee is the best way to find mentors, organize your own collecting, review the latest studies before their publication and have your own findings reviewed by a group of helpful peers.



*Figure 5. Cancels from states. Add the U.S. territories and you have a lifetime of challenge.*

You will enjoy the challenge of this series!



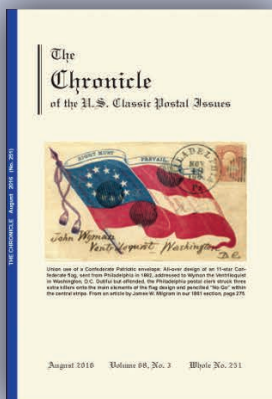
Thanks go to Kevin Lowther, Dan Pagter, Gregory Shoults, Larry Zabik and Eloise Hintersteiner for comments improving this article.

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1. Larry S. Weiss and Gerald Nylander, "Major New Discovery: Two Patterns of 'USPS' Double Line Watermarks Exist," *The United States Specialist* 80, no. 8 (August, 2009) 341-353, "Why Has It Taken 100+ Years to Identify the Forward-Stepping 'USPS' Double Line Watermark?" *The United States Specialist* 80, no. 9 (September, 2009) 394-402, "Catalog Implications of the Existence of Two Patterns of 'USPS' Double Line Watermarks" *The United States Specialist* 80, no. 10 (October, 2009) 437-448, "Philatelic Discovery at the Kitchen Table" *The United States Specialist* 80, no. 10 (November, 2009) 493-496.
2. Weiss, Larry S. "Why Collect the U.S. Washington-Franklin Heads? A 100th Anniversary Tribute Part I" *The United States Specialist* 79, no. 11 (November, 2008) 486-500, 509-523. A total of 10 parts appear in subsequent issues.

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compiled by **Kim D. Johnson**  
USSS #7335 | ✉westhome1@aol.com

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**It will return soon.**

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This monthly report is used to update the *Durland Standard Plate Number Catalog*.



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| 17582                                       | James Armstrong, Tempe, AZ      |                                                             | New members 9 |
| 17583                                       | Abu Amanullah, Frederick, MD    |                                                             | Reinstated 4  |
| 17584                                       | Michael Puzio, Midwest City, OK |                                                             |               |
| 17585                                       | Walter Kasell, Cambridge, MA    | Total                                                       | +13           |
| APPLICATIONS PENDING                        |                                 | SUBTRACTIONS:                                               |               |
|                                             |                                 | Deceased                                                    | 3             |
| 17573–17579                                 |                                 | Total                                                       | - 3           |
| NEW MEMBERS                                 |                                 | NET CHANGE                                                  |               |
|                                             |                                 |                                                             | +10           |
| 17564–17572                                 |                                 | TOTAL MEMBERSHIP                                            |               |
| REINSTATED                                  |                                 | September 30, 2024                                          | 1403          |
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| 17288                                       | Jim Carlson                     |                                                             |               |
| 17535                                       | Thomas Richardson               |                                                             |               |
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|                                             |                                 | Richard Zane                                                |               |
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