

Our 32nd Year

Coil Line



Journal of the PNC³
 Plate Number Coil Collectors Club

www.pnc3.org

American Philatelic Society Affiliate # 185

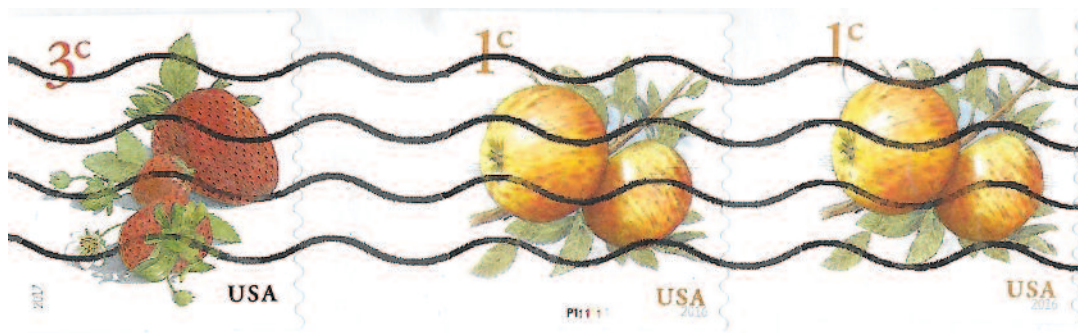
June 2019

Vol. 32, No. 6

Whole No. 372



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Coil Line

Journal of the Plate Number
Coil Collectors Club (PNC³)

Published by: PNC³

ISSN: 1931-5112

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Advertising Rates (single insertion)

Full Page	\$75.00	Eighth Page	\$12.00
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Classified ad rates are six cents a word per issue with a minimum of \$3.00 per ad. Members receive two 50-word ads per year per member at no charge. (There is a 10¢ per word cost for more than 50 words.)

All submitted material, including articles, are edited for inclusion in **Coil Line** and must be received by the first of the month prior to the month of publication.

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Coil Line is published monthly and is available digitally with annual member dues of \$12. A printed version of **Coil Line** is also available. To U.S. addresses, to receive printed edition add \$22 for First Class Mailing. To Non-USA addresses, add \$27 for mailing. Past print issues of **Coil Line** are available at \$2.50 per copy (quantities limited).

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Postal mailings prepared by: Brian Snippen, 1010 Blue Sage Rd NE, Rio Rancho NM 87144. Send email to: snippenb@gmail.com. Phone: 505-404-1624.

Mailed from Zip Code 87185 on or near May 20, 2019.



Scott #12599b (issued June 24, 1994) plate # D1111

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(For **Coil Line**-related matters, please see column at left for appropriate contact.)

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Digital Edition Distribution: Frank Covey

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Last month I mentioned a trial-and-error process that collectors might try in order to find out what coil formats from large rolls are available from USPS Philatelic Fulfillment. This month's Recent PNC Issue Information chart (Page 71) includes a note with a specific person to request to order strips of 500 from the new fruits 3K coils. Thanks to Frank Covey for that information.

Our club's annual board and general membership meetings are quickly approaching. Both meetings will be held on Saturday, August 3 in Omaha, Nebraska, in conjunction with the APS StampShow. As usual, the club will have a booth at the show. Specific details as to the time and place of the meetings and location of our booth will appear in **Coil Line** as soon as they are available. If you plan to attend the show, don't forget to stop by and, if possible, consider volunteering some time to staff the booth.

On another show-related topic, if you plan to exhibit at StampShow or any other show, and your exhibit includes PNC material, please reach out to Richard Beecher, chairman of the Awards & Exhibits Committee. Richard will arrange to get the club awards to the show committee. Contact Richard at least 30 days before any show at which your exhibit will be shown.

Webmaster Allan Clapp has constructed a new feature on the club website that will allow renewal dues to be paid online via PayPal. We hope to have this fully tested and available for the 2020 renewal season. More details will appear in **Coil Line** as we get closer to the end of the year.

Results for the March auction appeared in **Coil Line** last month. According to auctioneer Joe Sedivy, overall results were a little better than the previous auction. I hope all were satisfied with their purchases. It's not too soon to begin thinking about items to consign to the next auction.

Address Change for Catalog Orders
 Send orders for PNC³ Catalog Chapters to this new address:
 Andrew M. Jakes
 6000 Riverside Dr #R4402
 Dublin, OH 43017
pnc3treasurer@gmail.com
 (no change in email address)

Membership Update

as of May 1, 2019

New Member

Ricky Pease 2393
 2014 Sun Valley Road
 St Joseph, MO 64507
 * * *

Reinstated

Rudy de Mordaigle 1830

Membership at Beginning of Month	406
New Members	+1
Reinstated	+1
Membership at End of Month	408

Coil Line Classifieds

START a new collection! 25 different used PS1s with Purple Machine Cancels. All are solid without faults. \$45.05 value. Yours for \$20. Contact johnwhimes@yahoo.com to arrange payment or send \$20 payment to John Himes, P.O. Box 453, Cypress, CA 90630-0453. 6/19

* * *

33¢ TROPICAL Flowers S/a booklet (\$6.60) Scott #3313b, 41 of 45 known plate numbers and varieties. Face value \$27060, asking \$250. Walter Zarzycki. Phone 734-782-0047 6/19

* * *

PNC USED singles, used strips, MNH PS5s. Great prices! Guaranteed quality! No hassles! Visit <http://www.angelfire.com/ca5/HimesPNCs> or send LSASE for lists to John Himes, PO Box 453, Cypress, CA 90630-0453. Please specify what you collect. Or email johnwhimes@yahoo.com 12/19

* * *

USED PNCs on and off cover. Our new eight-page list of Used PNCs is yours free. We also have a free new 33-page list of MNH PNCs, Booklets, Booklet Panes, many by plate number and position. Specify which list is wanted. Vic Collinino, PO Box 300-P, Stratham, NH 03885-0300 or email your name and address to vimco@comcast.net 4/20

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 and that includes PNC³ classified ads!
 Members are entitled to two free 50-word ads
 per year. Send yours to the editor today for
 inclusion in the next *Coil Line*!

The Story Behind the 20c Flag Spliced to the 17c Electric Auto

Part 3 of 3

Tim Lindemuth
PNC³ #1760
timlind@ksu.edu

Home at last

Now able to study the error in detail, the tape splice looks like ordinary, torn masking tape. The joining tape on the reverse side neatly measures 50 mm wide by 24.5 mm high and displays the crinkly surface texture of tan-colored masking tape (Figure 4). Beneath the tape on the front, plate number 3 appears at the top of the imperforate, miscut precanceled Electric Auto (Figure 5).



Figure 4

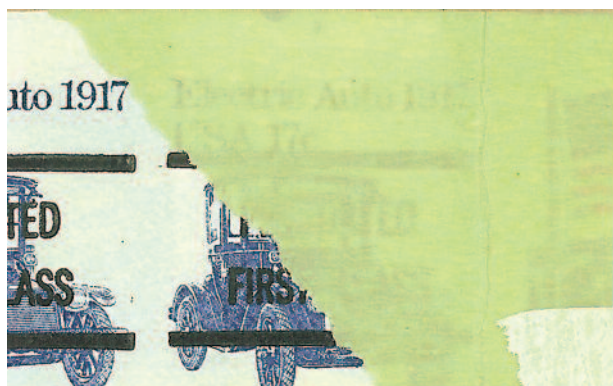


Figure 5

A precancel gap exists between the second and third Auto stamps. The word "PRESORTED" in the overprint "Presorted First-Class" measures 11 mm wide making it the Type A overprint.

Greenwood, who was among the first to discuss the precancelled gap pairs, said the gap on the splice is a "one left position" or, in other words, one position left of the plate number.

The tagging block on the 20c Flag measures 21 mm high by 18 mm wide, the measurement for tagging on the coils produced on the B Press. That tagging also matches Nalbandian's report that an imperforate plate number 1 was among the original 18 Flag coil stamps.

I contacted Bob Nalbandian, who now operates the

stamp business for his father. The miscut imperforate Electric Auto precancel coil showed plate numbers 3 and 4 on the top. All the miscut plate strips were sold long ago, he said. Since Plate 3 appears on the splice, using that as a starting point to count the balance of the 170 Auto coils, we determined there would have been seven plate numbers spaced at 23-stamp intervals on the Cottrell Press plates prior to when his father broke down the original coil in 1985. Thus, four strips were Plate 3 and three were Plate 4.

While the splice was widely illustrated in the stamp press and books by authors Ken Lawrence and Joe Agris, news of the modern rarity had fallen into obscurity. I alerted

Linn's Stamp News and a story appeared in the August 29, 2005, issue under the headline, "Auto, Flag coil splice sold for \$5,000."

Furthermore, the splice had never been listed in Steven R. Datz' *Catalogue of Errors on U.S. Postage Stamps*.

I contacted Datz by phone at his

Loveland, Colorado residence to see if there was an interest for listing the splice. He responded affirmatively, adding that he needed a good color image as well as signed documentation from both Greenwood and me attesting to the \$5,000 sale price.

This documentation was provided and the splice and the transaction first appeared in the 2006 catalogue.

Returning to Schiff's 2005 interview, his astute knowledge of errors put the splice in proper perspective.

"This is a highly specialized error that belongs in a very specialized collection. While it is unique, you can't compare it to an error like the inverted Jenny airmail stamp or the inverted \$1 Lamp and Candle stamp," Schiff said.

"I doubt any collector outside the United States would be interested in an error like this, but a stamp invert is always in demand, even overseas."

Nevertheless, the splice appeared on the title page of my 20c Flag entry in the Washington 2006 World Philatelic Exhibition. It gave me enough rarity and scarcity points to elevate the exhibit to the small gold medal level. The precancel exhibit received a vermeil medal at the Pacific 1997 World Philatelic Exhibition in San Francisco.

Hotchner saw me at the Washington show and offered his congratulations.

"It is a rare achievement to see a modern stamp receive any gold at international competition," he said.

The 19-year wait to acquire the splice had been worth it. But as I quoted Schiff earlier, "That's not the end of the story."

Will the First Owner Step Forward?

When I began writing this history of the splice in 2014, I sent a draft for Greenwood to review for factual accuracy, as I did with Schiff and Hotchner. John Greenwood emailed me on January 14, 2015, to set the record straight. On the exhibit page displaying the splice at Washington 2006, the caption read "From the John Tison collection 1986-2005."

"I competed against you in that auction for this piece," Greenwood wrote.

He continued, "John Tison was a close friend that made collecting imperfs very interesting. Usually I would try to buy the whole roll of a new find, take it apart and divide it between friends. When something was more than my budget allowed, I bought it for Tison. We bought stuff and traded with each other."

Greenwood sold the splice to Tison in 1993. The sale "paid for my son's junior/senior year at the University of California, Riverside," he said. The sale of "a small imperfs collection of 18c Flags coils paid for another year of my son's college," he recalled.

Greenwood is the go-to expert for U.S. imperforate plate number coil errors since they were first reported in 1981. He and California dealer Dennis Chamberlain found early precancel coil rolls of 500 stamps and coined the phrases "line gap" and "gap positions."

The splice was shown in my entry at the 2016 New York World Stamp Show and garnered another small gold medal. The caption now correctly reads, "From the John Greenwood collection 1986-1993, and the John Tison collection 1993-2005."

We met at the show and enjoyed dinner with friends at a Midtown Manhattan restaurant. During dinner, I asked if Greenwood would share what Tison paid him for the splice.

"\$12,000."

I picked my jaw up off the restaurant floor.

"That was \$7,000 more than what I paid in 2005. Why didn't you buy it back?" I said.

Without hesitation Greenwood said, "I don't compete or exhibit my stamps. You do. If I had the splice, no one would ever see it. But with you, I knew others would get to see it and appreciate it. Just remember me when it's time to sell."

About the Author

The retired alumni magazine editor at Kansas State University, Tim Lindemuth first exhibited the U.S. 20c Flag

stamp in 1983 while it was in its original 1981-1985 post-office circulation. The modern exhibit helped legitimize "waste basket philately" as a worthy topic for national and international philatelic competition.

Accessing the Members Area of the PNC³ Website (pnc3.org)

New club members receive a welcome message inviting them to access the website. New members should follow the link in the email.

- Choose a UserID and Password and entering both into the resulting webpage.
- Record the UserID and Password for future access.
- When three green check marks and the words "Passwords Match" appear, click on the "Activate Account" button.

Existing members who have not yet followed this process or are having access issues should send email to webmaster@pnc3.org.

Provide a phone number and contact time and the webmaster will make contact to get access set up or resolve other issues.



Uh-Oh!

The editor is out of articles!

The **Coil Line** "Finished Copy" folder is EMPTY! That means I need YOU to write an article for the July issue.

Articles don't have to be long and they don't have to be perfectly written. Just send me a paragraph or two about a favorite or interesting item and I'll take it from there.

Deadlines and procedures information can be found on Page 46 of this issue.

Looking to Recycle Coil Strips?

PNC³ welcomes donations of mint postage, including presort coils.

Send donations to:

Brian Snippen

1010 Blue Sage Rd NE, Rio Rancho NM 87144

Marginal Markings

Sometimes stamps are made that should be destroyed before they make it to consumers. This includes items that show marginal markings that are normally cut from the web.



Figure 1

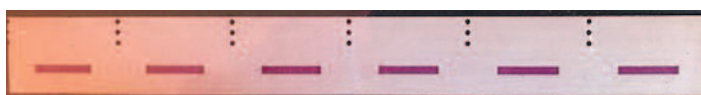


Figure 2

Figures 1 and 2 show the top and bottom of the old 4¢ Lincoln (#1058). The #1058b (imperf) comes from the top row of the web and includes the E bars that are normally found above each stamp. Figure #2 is the bottom of the web that has been perforated (#1058) but this production waste shows horizontal bars below the perforations and each stamp.



Figure 3

Figure 3 is a similar photo of a miscut and imperf 5.9¢ precancel (1901b) with the vertical E bars above images. It is also a gap position (gap in the precancel bars) which is commonly where the PNC# is found. However, that portion of the stamp with the number would be near the top of the next row of stamps.

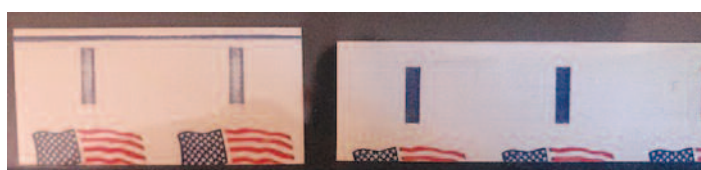


Figure 4

Figure 4 shows two examples of the 22¢ Flag (#2115f) with the E bars and one having additionally a hor-



Figure 5



Figure 6

izontal bar above the E bars.

Figure 5 is a clear view of the lower horizontal bar on a pair while Figure 6 shows the bar touching the bottom

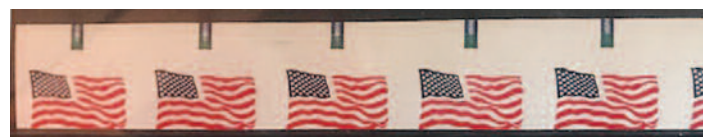


Figure 7

of the PNC #17.

Next, I am showing examples of the prephosphored



Figure 8

imperf 25¢ Yosemite (2280c) with E bars (Figure 7).

Finally, of real interest to me was finding a roll with only a horizontal bar, both a perfed and an imperf example (figures 8 and 9). It was miscut so far down no part of the stamp shows.

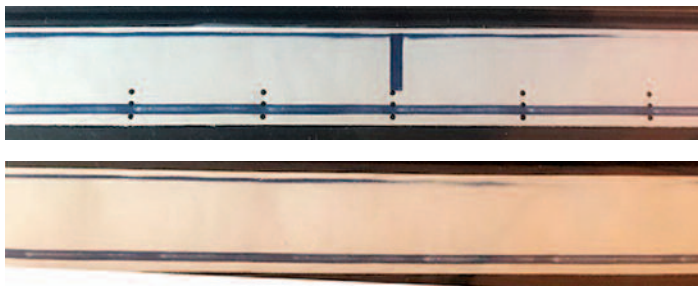


Figure 9

How did I know what it was? A stamp store had the roll still sealed with 25¢ Yosemite printed on the packaging. I had to buy it only seeing lines through the plastic. I believe the spotty line below the solid horizontal line is the edge of the printing cylinder.

Questions about your subscription?
 Contact PNC³ Secretary
 Daniel Farrar at farrard2@gmail.com

New Coil Printer?



Figure 1

Robert E. Thompson

On April 17, 2019, I found a roll of stamps for the 2018 Flag from someone on eBay. What was unusual about it was the wrapper (Figure 1). The wrapper said "Coil of 50" stamps, the manufacturer was "BSA" not "BCA" and the image of the stamp on the wrapper was in three colors. There have been labels in the past that had different colors, but still only one color.

The self-adhesive label was trimmed with about 0.75 inches removed from the end so that it would stick to the roll. The label is about two inches longer than a genuine label. The barcode was changed from "07497007" to "07497507," I think to allow for the roll of 50 stamps. How-

ever, my barcode scanner was not able to read the barcode. It turns out that the stamps in the roll were actually real.

On the same day, I found another roll of stamps for the 2017 Flag from a different seller on eBay. Again, the wrapper (Figure 2) read "Coil of 50" stamps, and the image of the stamp on the wrapper was in three colors. On this roll, the manufacturer was "BCA."

The self-adhesive label was identical to the one in Figure 1, except for the printing. The barcode was changed from "07498006" to "07498500." And again, my barcode scanner was not able to read the barcode. The stamps in the roll were counterfeits similar to other versions of the BCA rolls I have found in the past.



Figure 2

Regional Meeting Hosts Sought

Several members have made it a habit to promote meetings in their areas. New meetings are encouraged as a way to share your hobby and enjoy the fellowship of like-minded collectors.

For information about hosting a meeting, contact regional meeting chairman Tony Bruno, PO Box 624, East Lyme CT 06333-0624 or email tbee@aol.com.

PNC³ meeting notices are advertised at no charge in **Coil Line**. Please submit details to the editor three months in advance of the meeting.

Catalog Corner with Frank Covey



The <55¢> Forever Windblown Flag 2019 coil of 100 was issued January 27, 2019 in Kansas City, MO 64108 and nationwide. No denomination appears on this stamp as it is intended to pay the current first class rate forever. On the same day, the first class rate increased from 50 cents to 55 cents.

Produced by Banknote Corporation of America (BCA) the coil has a B1111 plate number every 31st stamp. Most will collect this as a PS5 as there is only one design in the issue. A phosphor tagging break is evident under shortwave ultraviolet light, two stamps left (2L) of the plate numbered stamp as seen in the image below.

The rolls of 100 come in sticks several coils high. The image (left) shows the micro-bridges that keep the rolls attached until they are sold. The top and bottom of the printed web have no micro-bridges, making for interesting collectible varieties.

This same design is used in a coil by Ashton Potter (AP) (2019-1) issued on the same date. On the BCA version, USPS is microprinted at the tip of the flag. (See image to the left). Wrappers like the one shown below seal the coil. The flag will be rotated 90 degrees left when used, causing any plate number to be on the right edge of the stamp. A 2019 date stamp appears in the upper left corner after the design is rotated.



<55¢> Windblown Flag 2019
(SA) (BCA)
Plate **B1111**
PNC ID 2019-2



Another Type of Die Cut Shift: The Table Top

John Himes

Most of us are familiar with the odd die cut types that occur when the die cutting mat is shifted upward or downward on Sennett and Avery coils. On the Sennett coils, these take the shape of a cobra. On the Avery coils, we've seen bells, knolls and thimbles. (Examples of these types of die cuts can be found in PNC³ publications, in the reference section of the PNC³ website and in past **Coil Line** articles.) But what about odd shapes on BEP and Ashton Potter stamps? They're rare, but oddities do exist.

Figure 1 shows an H-rate Hat stamp (Scott 3265) with plate #1111 which was produced by the BEP. Note the



Figure 1

very large straight die cut toward the bottom of the stamp which occurs because the die cutting mat was shifted upward from its intended position. This can occur to varying degrees, but what's interesting about this example is the fact that the die cutting is shifted so much that the peak/valley from the next stamp below is shown forming at the bottom of the stamp. After much discussion among PNC³ officers, collectors and dealers, we've decided to call this anomaly a "table top" die cut.

Let's be clear. In order to qualify as a "table top," the



Figure 2

die cut must show the beginning of a peak/valley at the outer end of the straight section. A straight section alone is interesting, but to be a "table top," the bend at the end must exist. Although rare, several have now been found.

Figure 3 shows a BEP Flag Over Porch (Scott 2915A) #88888 with table top at bot-

tom. Figure 4 is a 2915A #99999. Figure 5 is a 2915A #66666A. Figure 6 is a 2915C #66666, but this time, the table top is at top, instead of bottom.

Figure 7 is also a 2915C #66666, but with the table top at the bottom. Figure 8 is a 37-cent Flag (Scott 3632) #1111 with the table top at top. As you can see, this anomaly occurs on several different BEP-produced coils. Sometimes it's at the top of the stamp; sometimes it's at the bottom.

Ashton Potter had similar difficulties with alignment of their die cutting mats, but, to date, I've only been able to dig up a couple of examples. Figure 9 shows an AP-produced 44-cent Flag (Scott 4393) with a table top die cut at bottom. Figure 10 shows a Star-Spangled Banner (Ft. McHenry Flag, Scott 4854) with a table top at bottom.

Just how rare are these die cuts? Dan Forgues has been looking for them for years and has literally gone through tens of thousands of used PNCs. He's only found



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

nine different plate numbers with these die cuts. I've looked at thousands, myself, and I've only found two different ones. The scans shown pretty much sum up what we've mutually found to date, although we've also found a few duplicates of these same plate numbers. In showing these to other members and dealers, most had never seen one before!

So, are they worth a thousand dollars per stamp? Far from it. From time to time one can be found on eBay, typically described as a "major die cut shift," and selling for as little as \$10 per copy. Given the rarity of these stamps, I feel like that's a great deal! But would I pay \$100 per copy? No way. Somewhere in between is probably a reasonable retail value. But don't get carried away when purchasing one of these table top oddities. Until we know more about quantities that exist, paying a large amount

for one of them is probably not a wise idea.

On the Cover —

John Himes found this nice with a plate # stamp and an interesting combination of stamps making up the non-profit rate.

So, what about mint strips? Have these anomalies been found on mint strips yet? In preparing this article, I discovered that Tom McFarland sold a mint PS5 with a table top on the bottom to Doug Iams about 15 years ago. With their permission, a close-up of that PS5 is provided in Figure 11. It's a 2915A #99999 with the table top at the bottom of the strip (the same plate number as seen used in Figure 4). Tom can't remember if he kept any of these for himself. If so, maybe he'll be able to report on that in a future edition of **Coil Line**.

Do you have others to report? If so, please let me know and provide a high-resolution scan or photocopy. If enough interest is shown, I'll try to write a follow-up article illustrating any new finds.

A special thanks to Dan Forgues for providing most of the scans in this article, as well as his invaluable knowledge that contributed greatly to the text. Also, many thanks to the PNC³ officers, collectors and dealers who helped with naming this anomaly and providing input for this article.



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

Coil Line is YOUR Magazine

We need YOUR articles to make it the best it can be!

Recent PNC Issue Info

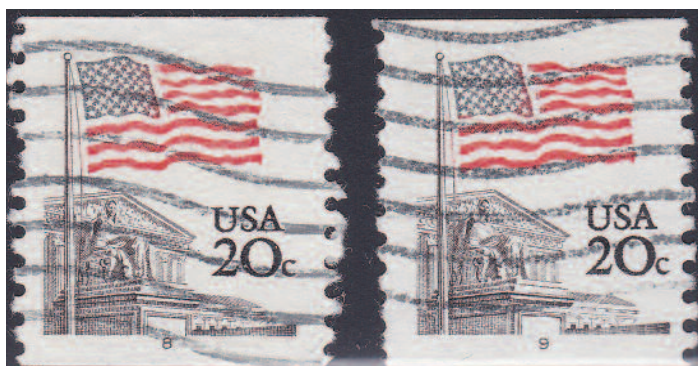
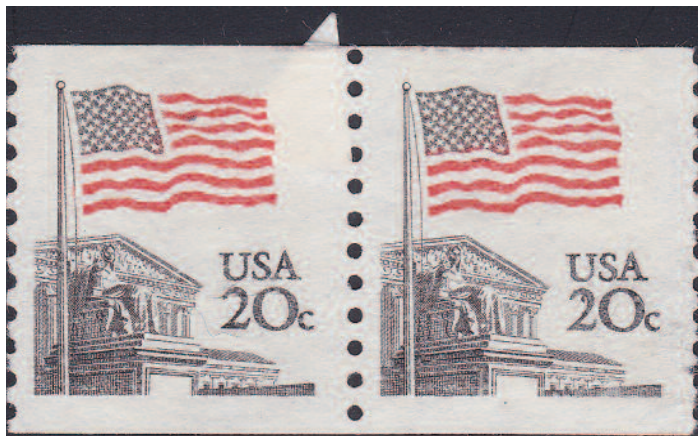
Denom	Issue Name	PNC-ID Number	Scott Number	Issue Date	Plate #	Interval	Roll Size	USPS Item Number	Tag	WAG or SA	T, M, B Back Numbers
<.35>	Coral Reefs FE	2019-5		3/29/19	P111111	32	100	745104	Block	SA	None
<.55>	Star Ribbon FE	2019-4		3/22/19	B111	27	10,000	760504	Overall	SA	T, B
<.55>	Star Ribbon FE	2019-4		3/22/19	B111	27	25**	760503	Overall	SA	
<.55>	Star Ribbon FE	2019-4		3/22/19	B111	27	3,000	759904	Overall	SA	T, B
<.55>	Star Ribbon FE	2019-4		3/22/19	B111	27	25**	759903	Overall	SA	
To Order These 4 3k & 500 rolls, call "800stamps24", speak with Patti at Philatelic Fulfillment 7:15 AM-3:15 PM CDT											
0.02	Meyer Lemons	2018-1	5256	1/27/19	B11111	28	3,000	750004	Untagged	SA	T, B
0.02	from 3k roll	2018-1	5256	1/27/19	B11111	28	500**	750015	Untagged	SA	T, B
0.03	Strawberries	2017-6	5201	1/27/19	P1111	27	3,000	750104	Untagged	SA	M
0.03	from 3k roll	2017-6	5201	1/27/19	P1111	27	500**	750115	Untagged	SA	M
0.05	Grapes	2016-4	5038	1/27/19	P111111	27	3,000	750204	Untagged	SA	M
0.05	from 3k roll	2016-4	5038	1/27/19	P111111	27	500**	750215	Untagged	SA	M
0.10	Red Pears	2017-5	5039	1/27/19	B111111	27	3,000	750304	Untagged	SA	T, B
0.10	from 3k roll	2017-5	5039	1/27/19	B111111	27	500**	750315	Untagged	SA	T, B
<.15>	Uncle Sam's Hat FE	2019-3	5341	1/27/19	B1111111	31	100	746904	Overall	SA	None
<.55>	Windblown Flag FE	2019-2	5343	1/27/19	B1111	31	100	740102	Overall	SA	None
<.55>	Windblown Flag FE	2019-1	5342	1/27/19	P1111	31	100	740104	Overall	SA	None
<.50>	Z Flag - 2018 FE	2018-3	5261	2/9/18	B111	31	100	749702	Overall	SA	None
<.50>	Z Flag - 2018 FE	2018-2	5260	2/9/18	P111	31	100	749704	Overall	SA	None
0.02	Meyer Lemons	2018-1	5256	1/18/18	B11111	28	10,000	760404	Untagged	SA	T, B
0.02	Meyer Lemons	2018-1	5256	1/18/18	B11111	28	500**	760415	Untagged	SA	T, B
<.49>	Father Ted Hesburgh FE	2017-8	5242	9/1/17	P11111	17	50	799404	Overall*	SA	None
<.49>	Flowers frm Garden FE	2017-7	5236a	8/16/17	B1111	28	3,000	755004	Overall	SA	B
		2017-7	5236a	8/16/17	B1111	28	10,000	760104	Overall	SA	T
	from 3k roll	2017-7	5236a	8/16/17	B1111	28	500**	755015	Overall	SA	B
	from 3k roll	2017-7	5236a	8/16/17	B1111	28	25**	755003	Overall	SA	B
	from 10k roll	2017-7	5236a	8/16/17	B1111	28	500**	760115	Overall	SA	T
	from 10k roll	2017-7	5236a	8/16/17	B1111	28	25**	760103	Overall	SA	T
0.03	Strawberries	2017-6	5201	5/5/17	P1111	27	10,000	760304	Untagged	SA	M
0.03	Strawberries	2017-6	5201	5/5/17	P1111	27	500**	760315	Untagged	SA	M
0.10	Red Pears	2017-5 (1)	5039	April 2017	B111111	27	10,000	N/A	Overall	SA	T, B
(0.05)	USA Star - Blue	2017-4	5172	2/10/17	P111	27	3,000	755104	Untagged	SA	Random
	from 3k roll	2017-4	5172	2/10/17	P111	27	25**	755103	Untagged	SA	Random
		2017-4	5172	2/10/17	P111	27	10,000	760204	Untagged	SA	Random
	from 10k roll	2017-4	5172	2/10/17	P111	27	25**	760203	Untagged	SA	Random
FE = Forever											
(1) Scott did not assign a catalog number for this new release, though PNC ³ did assign a PNC-ID number.											Top
These items cannot be ordered from the USPS Philatelic Fulfillment Center.											Middle
*	NOTE 1: After careful inspection, it is observed that these coils have overall tagging.										Bottom
	These items do NOT have block tagging as suggested by USPS announcements.										
**	NOTE 2: Roll sizes in Italics are quantities available from Stamp Fulfillment Services using adjacent USPS Item Number. These are partial rolls from 3K or 10K rolls.									Compiled by Andy Jakes Up-dated 5/01/2019	

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20¢ Flag Over Supreme Court Black Field of Stars Color Error

Scott Walker

As a young air traffic controller serving in our nation's Air Force I was taught by a grizzled old Master Sergeant to trust my gut instinct, not only in keeping airplanes separated on the radar scope (and thus preventing aluminum showers) but in all aspects of life. There were many more life lessons I learned in the early 1980s during my first assignment in Germany but trusting myself has by far helped me as a person and a stamp collector.



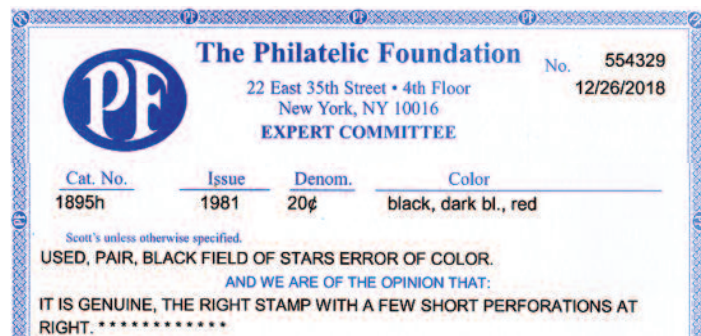
In late 2012, I purchased a lot of used plate number coil singles online. When I received them, I noticed that several of the 20¢ Flag Over Supreme Court (FOSC) issue had what appeared to be washed out fields of stars that weren't the vivid blue color found on most FOSC stamps. While the black and red colors seemed to be as expected, the field of stars on these stamps looked more gray than blue. I had this nagging feeling that I had read something about a color error for this issue. I remembered a footnote for FOSC plate number 9 in *The 1995 Plate Number Coil Catalog* (edited by Richard Nazar), "On all reported examples, the field of the flag was lightly printed, which makes the black ink appear gray."

My intention was to send them for expertization and I set them aside in a stock book reserved for plate number coils. As often happens to many of us, real life got in the

way and I didn't revisit the stamps for nearly six years. In July of 2018, I finally packaged up the stamps and sent them to the Philatelic Foundation (PF). The shipment consisted of a used single from plate 8, a used single from plate 9 and an unnumbered pair.

I didn't think about them again until early November and called the PF to learn their status. I was told that they were still being examined and to check back in another month. Using PF's online Certificate Search, I searched their website and was shocked by what I saw. All three submissions were given the opinion that "(Submitted item description), BLACK FIELD OF STARS ERROR OF COLOR. AND WE ARE OF THE OPINION THAT IT IS NOT SCOTT 1895h, RATHER, IT IS A SCOTT 1895, THE STAMPS BLEACHED TO CHANGE THE COLOR OF THE FIELD OF STARS FROM BLUE TO BLACK *****".

Needless to say, I was shocked. I didn't believe that the stamps had been bleached as there was bright red ink visible on the field of stars for all three stamps. I immediately contacted Dan Forgues, sending scans of the stamps in question, to ask his opinion. He gave me some great information and suggestions and put me in touch with Richard Nazar. I emailed Mr. Nazar and included the same scans that I sent to Mr. Forgues. He responded that he didn't think the stamps should have received the opinion that they did. I contacted the PF again, speaking with David Petruzelli and was told that Lewis Kaufman had taken exception with the original opinion and was re-evaluating the stamps.



In mid-January of this year, I received the stamps and certificates back from the PF. All three submissions were certified as genuine Scott 1895h, black field of stars, error of color. I was thrilled that, although it took six months, PF finally came through with the correct opinions. The certificates have not yet been updated on the website, but I'm sure it is only a matter of time before the corrected information is listed. As for me, I'm simply happy that I was able to add both plate number singles and the pair to my PNC collection. Sometimes it pays to follow your instincts.