

JOURNAL OF THE
PLATE NUMBER
COIL COLLECTORS
CLUB - PNC³

COIL LINE

Coil Line: The Early Years

The March 1991 issue was notable in its time for its five-page Stamps 'N Stuff ad: A front page story begins, "What is likely the largest ever auction of PNC material on cover, including first day covers and ..." "Much of the material has been gleaned from a hoard (i.e., a barn full) of commercial covers from the early 1980s ..."

Some of the rarest PNCs were in the ad. "...Rarest of all used during the 18¢ letter rate" was 18¢ Flag #7 10/21/81, estimated at \$3,000. We'll likely not see its auction kind again. – Editor

Coming in the March Coil Line

The PNC³ Catalog Committee will have an updated order form for the **current PNC³ publications** in print, on the wrapper of next month's *Coil Line*.

And... the PNC³ **Spring Auction** will take up quite a few pages, with lots that members have consigned.

This means a Bid Sheet will be provided on the wrapper of the March issue, too.

Meanwhile, right now the **8th edition PNC Values List** is offered with its own separate order form, on this issue's wrapper.

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It's PNC³'s 35th Anniversary!

New Plate # P2222 for <60¢> Flags 2022 Coil

by Ron Blanks

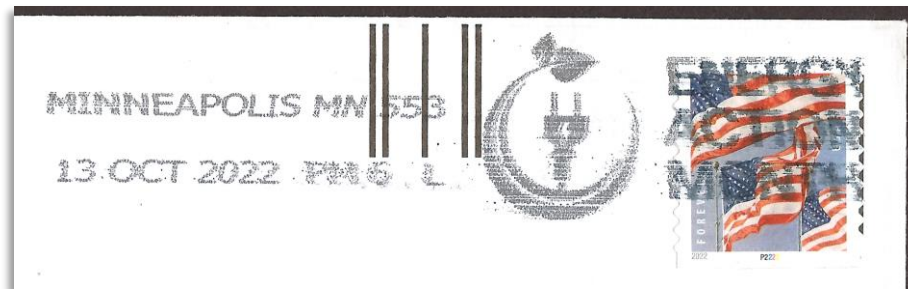


Beginner's luck happened upon PNC³ member David Mohs. This past December, he first found new plate number P2222 on a used Flags 2022 coil (produced by Ashton Potter). The coil was previously known only with plate # P1111.

"Beginner" refers only to David's PNC³ membership. Some of you were reading his name as a "new member" in the December *Coil Line* while he was examining a batch of recently mailed covers to make his discovery.

In addition to used PNCs, his areas of interest include EFOs (indicating a good measure of experience). In addition, he also serves as secretary for the Saint Cloud (Minn.) Area Stamp Club.

David's first P2222 find was on a cover canceled Oct. 13, 2022 in Minneapolis. Its upper right corner is shown below, with a close-up of the coil shown nearby. He found one more P2222 that Dec. day, canceled Nov. 8 (shown at bottom).



(please see next page)

Cropped images, first two covers reported with new #P2222 on Flags 2022 coil

► P2222 found on 2022 Flag (from page 1)

Interestingly, the Nov. 8 PNC is part of a pair of the First-Class forever coils, \$1.20 in postage at time of mailing. They appear to be used on the same kind of return envelope as the single-use case of Oct. 13. That prompted a follow-up interview on January 14th in which David added the following information:

The firm providing these return envelopes typically receives a “response that consistently weighs considerably less than one ounce. Under some circumstances, responses legitimately exceed one ounce and thus trigger the need for additional postage.”

David described several traits of the (empty) cover that are “consistent with thick contents.” While business mailers would be expected to use the Additional Ounce category of stamps in such cases, it is understandable that the average household mailer would not. Instead, as likely the case here we have a “convenience use.”

With the additional-ounce rate of 24¢, the pair of coils met machinable letter postage of not over three ounces, with 12¢ overpayment. (We assume it was machinable since it was inkjet-canceled!)

The above discussion undergirds the high probability that the PNC pair on cover will be a highly desirable postal history example. Only a brief window of usage will have existed once the new 2023 Flag coils are issued.

Speaking of postal history, David also shared a surprise in the interview. In early January he found an earlier example of P2222 on the Flags 2022 coil. It is postmarked Oct. 12, 2022, a day earlier than the discovery cover, and only the third one he has found.

Meanwhile, *Coil Line's* Catalog Corner writer Frank Covey was able to respond to some speculation about the initial report of P2222. (A few had raised the specter that they were counterfeit examples, as odd as that might be to some of us. It would be odd because no P2222 had existed before on any Flags 2022 the counterfeiters ostensibly would use to copy.)

Frank reported that he had found mint rolls with P2222 at a post office in Virginia on December 28.

**(5¢) Patriotic Block Nonprofit Org. Coil
To be Issued March 1**

In its Jan. 10, 2023 new-stamp details update, the USPS provided March 1, 2023 as the issue date for the new coil. It will be issued at Liberty, NY 12754 without national ceremony.

**Ashton Potter's
“3 Flags 2022” Coil Found
Counterfeited**

by Frank Covey



PNC³ member Jeff Fiszbein has discovered one of the first counterfeits of Ashton Potter's Flags 2022 coil. He shared the top image with me on December 20, 2022. The top coil is a counterfeit Jeff found on cover. Below it is a genuine Ashton Potter Flags 2022 coil. The die cuts give the counterfeit away. Ashton Potter coils have square corners top and bottom.

(The fake's die cut pattern is more reminiscent of Banknote Corp. of America's coils. Yet the counterfeiter added “P1111” as plate number.) Page 12 shows a mint strip of the counterfeit. At press time, the relation of that strip to the above used fake was unexplained.



Earlier P222222 on 1¢ Apples. After the report on the 1¢ Apples PNC # P222222 in January's *Coil Line*, I checked my covers and found this USO cover that I received on 11/15/2022. My P2 glows bright under shortwave UV. — *Dan Farrar #743 (Cropped images from cover, below and at left.)*



Readers Forum

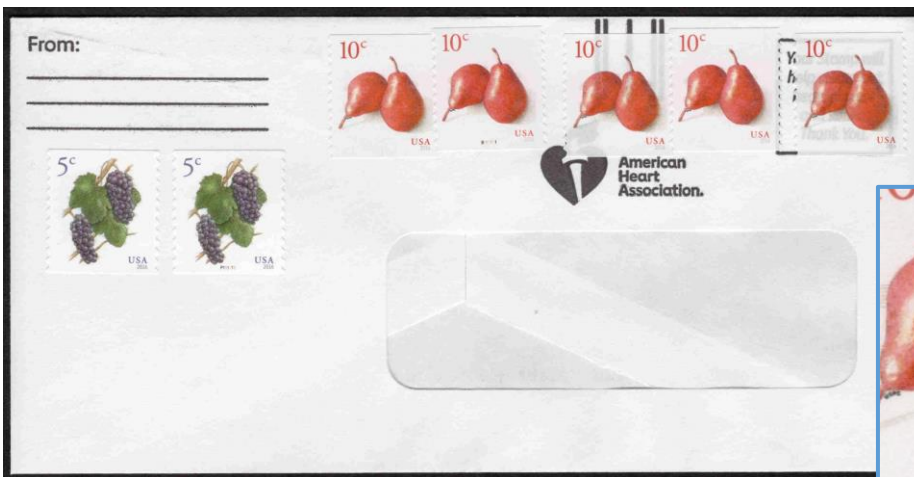


More 60¢ courtesy reply envelopes. (In December's *Coil Line*, I remarked on not yet seeing a 60¢ courtesy reply envelope from Disabled American Veterans. January's Readers Forum showed readers' submissions of other mailers' 60¢ reply envelopes. We have more here, including from the DAV. — *Editor*)



I have attached scans of DAV reply envelopes in my collection. One has two 5¢ Grapes coils on the left (*shown at left*) and the other has them on the right. Unfortunately, neither has a numbered PNC.

But note my other scans, of American Heart Association covers. One has six 10¢ Pears coils (*not shown, plate # on second*). The other (*shown at bottom left*) has five 10¢ Pears (# on second) and two 5¢ Grapes coils (# on second).



Sometimes the American Heart Association uses stamps other than the Fruits, but I don't have any that add up to 60¢. — *Peter Hoffman #889*



Close-ups, second 10¢ (#B11111, Scott 5039), second 5¢ (#P111111, Scott 5038) coils on cover at left.

▲ New 40¢ Red Fox affixer coil (*not shown*) issued Jan. 5 came in nick of time for users of multiple coils like the above. Letter rate rose to 63¢ on January 22nd.

PNC COMMERCIAL COVERS by Rob Washburn

Installment #152

“Back-of-the-Book Issues” (Part 1)



21¢ Shield & Bunting # A11 PNC on international letter to United Kingdom, postmarked 7/8/97.
*(Scott #CVP32 Unisys denomination printer, solid tagging coil example; earliest documented use with #A11.
See next page for variable rate coils Earliest Uses list.)*

This month, I present Part 1 of the “Back of the Book” PNCs, the variable rate coils. (See list on next page.) “BOB” is shorthand for Scott catalog #s like B1, C1, etc.

Most variable rate PNC covers were philatelically inspired. So when you find one that’s truly commercial, you have found quite a gem.

If you have an earlier usage than the ones listed here, please let me know by contacting me at: Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, Maine 04976, email: stamps@beeline-online.net, telephone: (207) 474-8021.

The second and final printing of my recent book, THE FIELD GUIDE TO COLLECTING PNC COMMERCIAL COVERS is now available. Only 100 copies were printed so if you want one, you should order it soon. \$25 postpaid by check or money order to my address above.

Variable Rate Coils: What are They?

Variable rate coils represent early field tests of U.S. Postal Service efforts to supplant traditional postage stamps, in concert with a “self help” lobby station of interactive screen and weigh scale. The USPS sought a new more flexible means of “evidencing postage” that was easy for the public to access and use, especially when post office counters were closed.

On paper, the approach must have seemed elegant, simple and practical... leveraging
(please see next page)

Variable Rate Coil PNCs: Earliest Uses

	Plate #	Earliest Use
Scott #CVP31 Shield Bunting solid tagging		
1¢	1	8/27/92
2¢	1	4/?/94
3¢	1	4/9/95
4¢	1	12/29/05
5¢	1	? (<i>? = unknown on dated cover</i>)
6¢	1	? (<i>? = unknown on dated cover</i>)
7¢	1	6/24/06
8¢	1	4/13/07
9¢	1	8/9/03
10¢	1	?
11¢	1	3/20/07
12¢	1	6/2/05
13¢	1	4/10/06
14¢	1	6/2/05
15¢	1	?
16¢	1	11/17/07
17¢	1	1/12/07
18¢	1	12/26/03
CVP31 Shield Bunting solid tagging		
19¢	1	?
29¢	1	8/21/92
CVP31a Shield/Bunting mottled tagging		
29¢	1	12/19/94
CVP31b Shield/Bunting new font, solid tagging		
29¢	1	11/9/94
CVP31c Shield/Bunting new font, mottled tagging		
22¢	1	7/11/96
29¢	1	12/15/94
32¢	1	10/29/97
CVP32 Unisys Shield/Bunting solid tagging		
20¢	A11	4/?/04
21¢	A11	7/8/97 (<i>shown on page 4</i>)
25¢	A11	4/8/95
29¢	A11	2/19/94
31¢	A11	7/3/97
98¢	A11	11/9/94
CVP33 Shield/Bunting (1996) mottled tagging		
20¢	11	10/30/97
32¢	11	4/12/96

► Variable rate coils (continued from page 4)

existing technology and the public's familiarity with post office lobby vending machines.

Of course, matters did not work out so well and the self-help stations (called "Postage and Mailing Centers") never went into mass installation. For further reading, see the October 1992 issue of *Coil Line*. That begins with, "Much of this issue ... is devoted to the Variable Rate Coil stamps and experiences PNC³ members have had with the machines."

In the Earliest Uses list provided at left, "Unisys" is the name of one of the contractors providing the machines. Clues of who supplied the machine that a given coil came from is in the printing of the postage value, and design orientation. Unisys printed a "\$" sign before the value on vertical-design coils. (All other types listed before Scott #CVP32 come from ECA GARD-made machines, which printed an asterisk "*" on horizontal-design coils. An example is shown on page 8.)

The coil stamp rolls were either made by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) or the American Bank Note Co (ABNC). The BEP supplied all of the coil types except CVP32 (whose rolls have ABNC's plate number A11). The BEP cataloged types of rolls before CVP32 have plate number 1; those of CVP33 have plate number 11.

– Ron Blanks

Back Number Values List: Sub-Committee to Form



The PNC³ Catalog Committee is forming a new sub-committee to create a back number Values List.

The last PNC Back Number Values List was compiled and published in 2006 and is out of print.

If you have an interest in back numbers and would like to be part of this effort, please contact Frank Covey by email or phone. Frank Covey, email: ecoilline@comcast.net, or phone: 309.255.9548.



President's Message

Robert Martin

Hello Plate Number Coil collectors!

This month I would like to bring attention to our club's auctions. Auctions are a great way to dispose of your unwanted philatelic material, and a great way to find some bargains of new material for your hobby.

Here is my philosophy about collecting stamps (or any other thing, for that matter.) It is a nice feeling to have a collection, and finding difficult items to fill those open spots can be very rewarding and challenging. So how do you find those scarce items? And how can you get some of those inexpensive items at very good prices?

Stamp collectors are some of the first people to engage in recycling. Every stamp that you have come from one of two places. It either came from the post office (or Stamp Fulfillment Services), where you went and bought it. Or you acquired it from somebody else, who thought it was worth saving.

At some point, each of us will have to decide what to do with our collections. If we do not, then when we pass away, our heirs will have to make those decisions. I believe the absolute best way to dispose of your collection, once you have finished collecting that particular area it represented, is through club auctions.

This gives the seller top dollar for the items being sold, without large commissions to an outside firm that conducts an auction. Likewise, it is a bargain for the buyers, because they also do not have to pay large commissions when buying items.

The peace of mind the sellers have is that most people in a club are pretty knowledgeable about the items the club specializes in. If you have a hidden treasure, it just might be discovered and highlighted in the sale.

And buyers also have the peace of mind that what they are getting is truly the real thing, without having to spend a lot to "expertise" the purchase.

For example, if you purchase a stamp worth \$15, do you really want to spend \$25 or more to pay to get some experts to look at your stamp and determine if it is genuine, if the cancellation is genuine, if there are defects, etc.?

One of the interesting things is that the people involved in your club are often the people who are involved in the expertizing. For lower value stamps, buyers are essentially getting this expert opinion for free. And for sellers, you know that you will be treated fairly when your items are sold.

Most auctions have a minimum price at which a seller is willing to part with the lot, so sellers are protected against a ridiculously low bid winning the lot. For example, if you have an item that routinely sells for \$75, you can set a minimum price, say, of half that amount. This eliminates the possibility of a buyer placing a very small bid, perhaps just \$1 on your lot, and winning it if nobody else at that auction happens to want it.

Buyers often can contact our auctioneer about questions. When I first started collecting plate number coils, I telephoned the auctioneer and asked for advice on how to get started. He was impartial, and helped me a lot.

So, if you have not taken advantage of our club's auctions, give one a try. Sell off some of those items that you are no longer collecting, and try to get a good price on items you desire. If you need help, contact our auctioneer. He can be very helpful!

Happy Valentine's Day to all!

Wanted: Webmaster

PNC³ is in need of a Webmaster. Responsibility includes updating the website with relevant information for members, adding improved functionality, and hunting down and correcting existing issues with the site such as dead links and other user-reported glitches.

The person sought should have relevant web development skills and ability to make changes quickly when needed. The club's modest budget restricts the time for which a professional web developer could be paid. Thus, we hope a PNC³ member would help with this job and accept a small monthly stipend to help cover their expenses.

After many months, we're still without help for this vital task. So if you have a friend or family member with relevant skills who'd consider accepting this role, let them know of our need. We realize we might have to pay more for an outside developer but will consider this course if none other is available.

Please contact Past President Tom McFarland if you are interested in the role or can refer us to someone outside PNC³ who could assume this responsibility.

Coil Line

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Scott 3769 # S11111 (issued Feb 4, 2003, 20 years ago this month)

Editor: Ronald Blanks

rblanks_stamps@yahoo.com 757.478.8719

Print Edition Mailings: Brian and Cory Snippen
snippenb@gmail.com

Digital Edition Emails: Frank Covey
ecoilline@comcast.net

Advertising Rates (one insertion)

Full Page	\$ 75.00	Eighth Page	\$ 12.00
Half Page	\$ 40.00	Business Card	\$ 12.00
Third Page	\$ 30.00	Back Cover, add	+\$37.50
Quarter Page	\$ 20.00	Inside Cover, add	+\$20.00
Sixth Page	\$ 15.00	Color, full page, add	+\$75.00

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A check or money order, made out to PNC3, must accompany camera-ready ads. Advertising copy must be submitted by the 10th of the month prior to month of publication. Please send all copy to Ronald Blanks, email at rblanks_stamps@yahoo.com, text or call 757.478.8719. (or mail letters only to PO Box 9282, Chesapeake VA 23321).

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 5th of the month prior to the month of publication. Article submission guidelines are available upon request by emailing the editor at the email address above.

Coil Line reserves the right to edit copy as necessary.

Coil Line is published monthly and is available digitally with annual member dues of \$12.00. A printed version of **Coil Line** is also offered. To U.S. addresses, to receive printed edition add \$26.00 for First Class Mailing. To Non-USA addresses, add \$34.00 for mailing. Past print issues of **Coil Line** are available at \$2.50 each (quantities limited).

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All content, letters to the editor, advertising questions should be addressed to the editor at contacts above. For mail delivery problems, contact the mailer below.

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.

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PNC³ Contacts

PNC³ Website www.pnc3.org
(open position), Webmaster
email: webmaster@pnc3.org

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

Elected Officers

Robert Martin, **President**, PO Box 389, Windsor, PA 17366. email: mauistampcollectordude@gmail.com 408-893-1040.

John Himes, **Vice President**, PO Box 453, Cypress, CA 90630-0453. email: johnwhimes@yahoo.com 714-826-8552.

Daniel Farrar, **Secretary**, 3386 Excalibur Circle NW, Canton, OH 44708. email: farrard2@gmail.com 330-477-6913.

Mel Borofsky, **Treasurer**, 101 W. Sterling Way, Leesburg FL 34788-2781. email: melborofsky@comcast.net 352-483-1408.

Tom McFarland, **Past President**, PO Box 372, Jamison, PA 18929. email: philatomic@verizon.net 609-273-4103.

Vince Jones, **At Large**, 825 Revere Way, Emerald Hills CA 94062. email: vincekjones3@gmail.com.

Frank O'Brien, **At Large**, 5076 Covelo Dr, Castle Rock CO 80108-8020. email: fjobrien@aol.com 949-212-7363.

PNC³ Catalog Committee: Frank Covey,
Andy Jakes, Tom McFarland, Gene Trinks, Peter Tukker,
Frank O'Brien.

PNC³ auctioneer: Joe Sedivy

Coil Line Production

editor: Ronald Blanks

senior consultant: Gene Trinks

technical consultant: Alan Thomson

contributing writers:

Frank Covey, Dan Forgues, John Greenwood, Al Haake,
John Himes, Doug Iams, Bob Rabinowitz, Robert E.

Thompson, Gene Trinks, Rob Washburn

proofreaders: John Himes, Michael Mules

printing: State Wide Printing - Albuquerque NM

subscriptions: Daniel Farrar

Welcome! If you are a new reader to *Coil Line*, PNC³ is in our 36th year. We are a community of stamp collectors focusing on plate numbered coil issues of the USA. The first PNCs were issued in 1981 and, in Feb. 1988, a group of PNC specialists founded our club. *Coil Line* was launched in May, 1988 and serves (along with other club literature) to inform collectors on the many aspects of PNCs. Studies include scarce numbers, varieties, printing methods, market values, PNCs on mail and more. Thanks for visiting, and we hope you'll join us!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

New Members

Cleveland R Forrester #2463
Chambersburg, PA 17201
All PNC collecting interests

William Griffiths MD, PhD #2464
El Campo, TX
Commercial Covers

Membership at Start of January.....401
New Members..... + 2
Reinstated..... + 0
Membership at Start of February.....403

Member Benefit Renewed in 2023

All members are entitled to two, 50-word ads per year at no cost. Additional words or ads are charged at 10¢ per word. Perhaps there's a research project, or some items on your want list you can't find? Try a classified. – March's issue is the next one available for 2023. Please send ad copy via email to the *Coil Line* editor by the 15th of month prior to desired issue. (See page 7 for contact info.) We have until February 15th for your March ad.

Coil Line Classifieds

LAST CHANCE to get my book, *The Field Guide to Collecting PNC Commercial Covers!* 2nd printing was only 100 copies. Includes ECU dates, rarity guide, colored cover photos and more. \$25 postpaid. Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976.

PNC USED singles, used strips, MNH PS5s, purple machine cancels, gap strips, test coils, hi brite strips. Great prices! Guaranteed quality! No hassles! Visit www.angelfire.com/ca5/HimesPNCs (or just Google "Himes PNCs") or email to johnwhimes@yahoo.com.

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 yimco@comcast.com.

NEW ITEM! Scott 4990? enhanced or reprinted Penguin coil. Bolder colors, brighter orange, red and darker purple. Differences visible easily from first version. Singles or multiples \$3 per stamp. PS5 S1111 \$30. Also comes with variety: Fat Red #1 priced \$30 for PS5. Another variety: Double Red #1, priced \$75 PS5. Al Haake, 84 Laurie Ct., Germantown, IL 62245. alhaake@hotmail.com. 618-523-4716.

Variable Rate Coils: ECA GARD Printed Example

At left is a cropped image from a USPS Souvenir Sheet (92-29), for the first "Postage and Mailing Center" stamp. ECA GARD machines printed an asterisk as part of its postage denomination printing.

The other machine supplier, Unisys, printed a \$ sign (shown on page 4). The three coils at left do not have plate # 1. Does anyone have a plate # on their souvenir page of this coil?



Recent PNC New Issue Information by Andy Jakes

New or changed entries underlined (prior chart: Jan. 2023 issue)



40¢ Red Fox coil received on collector mail postmarked on Martin Luther King, Jr holiday.

Denom	Issue Name (Designs Count)	PNC-ID Number	Scott Nbr	Issue Date	Plate #	Plate# Interval	Roll Size	USPS Item #	Tag	T, M, B Back #s
<.63>	Flags	2023-?		(to-come)						
<u>(0.05)</u>	<u>Patriotic Block</u>	<u>2023-?</u>		<u>3/1/2023</u>						
<.48>	Sailboats (2)	2023-3		1/22/2023	P1111	30	100	740604	Overall	
<.24>	School Bus	2023-2		1/5/2023	B111111	31	100	740504	Overall	
0.40	Red Fox	2023-1		1/5/2023	B11111	27	3,000	751200	Overall	
		2023-1			B11111	27	<i>500**</i>	751215		
0.40	Red Fox	2023-1		1/5/2023	B11111	27	10,000	761300	Overall	
		2023-1			B11111	27	<i>500**</i>	761315		
0.01	Apples	2016-8	5037	<u>10/2022</u>	P222222		10,000		<i>(Reported New Find)</i>	
(0.10)	Flags on Barns (4)	2022-7	5687a	4/14/2022	P11111	24	3,000	751104	Untagged	M
	from 3k roll	2022-7	5687a		P11111		<i>25**</i>	751103		
(0.10)	Flags on Barns (4)	2022-7	5687a	4/14/2022	P11111	24	10,000	761204	Untagged	M
	from 10k roll	2022-7	5687a		P11111		<i>25**</i>	761203		
<.58>	Mountain Flora (4)	2022-6	5675a	3/14/2022	P1111	27	3,000	750904	Overall	M
	from 3k roll	2022-6	5675a		P1111	27	<i>500**</i>	750915		M
	from 3k roll	2022-6	5675a		P1111		<i>25**</i>	750903		
<.58>	Mountain Flora (4)	2022-6	5675a	3/14/2022	P1111	27	10,000	761104	Overall	M
	from 10k roll	2022-6	5675a		P1111	27	<i>500**</i>	761115		M
	from 10k roll	2022-6	5675a		P1111		<i>25**</i>	761103		
(0.05)	Butterfly Flowers(2)	2022-5	5665a	2/1/2022	B1111	24	3,000	750804	Untagged	T(I),B(I)
	from 3k roll	2022-5	5665a		B1111	24	<i>500**</i>	750815		T(I),B(I)
	from 3k roll	2022-5	5665a		B1111	24	<i>25**</i>	750803		T(I),B(I)
(0.05)	Butterfly Flowers(2)	2022-5	5665a	2/1/2022	B1111	24	10,000	761004	Untagged	T(I),B(I)
	from 10k roll	2022-5	5665a		B1111	24	<i>500**</i>	761015		T(I),B(I)
	from 10k roll	2022-5	5665a		B1111		<i>25**</i>	761003		T(I),B(I)
<.58>	U.S. Flags 2022	2022-4	5657	1/9/2022	P1111	31	100	740404	Overall	None
	<i>(Reported New Find)</i>	2022-4	5657	<u>10/12/2022</u>	<u>P2222</u>	31	100		Overall	None
<.58>	U.S. Flags 2022	2022-3	5656	1/9/2022	B1111	31	100	740402	Block	None
<.58>	U.S. Flags 2022	2022-2	5655	1/9/2022	B1111	27	3,000	750704	Overall	T, B
	from 3k roll	2022-2	5655		B1111	27	<i>500**</i>	750715		T, B
	from 3k roll	2022-2	5655		B1111		<i>25**</i>	750703		T, B
<.58>	U.S. Flags 2022	2022-2	5655	1/9/2022	B1111	27	10,000	760904	Overall	T,B(I)
	from 10k roll	2022-2	5655		B1111	27	<i>500**</i>	760915		T,B(I)
	from 10k roll	2022-2	5655		B1111		<i>25**</i>	760903		T(I)
0.04	Blueberries	2022-1	5653	1/9/2022	B111111	27	3,000	750604	Untagged	
	from 3k roll	2022-1	5653		B111111	27	<i>500**</i>	750615		B(I)
0.04	Blueberries	2022-1	5653	1/9/2022	B111111	27	10,000	760804	Untagged	
	from 10k roll	2022-1	5653		B111111	27	<i>500**</i>	760815		T

**NOTE: Roll sizes in Italics are quantities available from Stamp Fulfillment Services T=Top, M=Middle, B=Bottom, using adjacent USPS Item#, partial rolls from 3K or 10K rolls. *Compiled by Andy Jakes as of 1/6/2023. (I)=inverted*

Snowman Perf on NDN Butte

by Frank Covey



A reader recently asked me about odd perforations on an older water-activated gummed (WAG) presort coil. In my research I came across this line of perforations in a PNC strip (shown cropped at left). It's a "Snowman perforation" found on the 1995 Nonprofit (5¢) Butte (PNC-ID 1995-2, Scott 2902) with plate # S111.

Sennett Security Products (SSP), the issuer of this stamp, put perforations on their WAG stamps using a skiving process. Rather than holes being punched through the paper, a perforation-pattern die pushes the paper from underneath into cutting heads that grinds away the paper. One portion of the web is done first. Other sections of the web are done by a second and third cutting head.

The pattern die slightly overlaps the one before it. So if alignment between the cutting heads is not perfect, then two holes can appear side by side creating an image like a snowman on its side.

This process is explained more fully in the 6th Edition of the Illustrated Glossary published in November 2019 under **Snowman Perforations**.

This variety did not make the 8th Edition (2022) of the PNC Values List. But it might make later editions as we learn further details about these varieties and their extent among coils near plate numbers.

This same skiving process also causes "large holes" and "small holes" varieties to occur among perforations found on SSP-supplied stamps. An example can be found on the 1998 Nonprofit (5¢) Wetlands S1111 (PNC-ID 1998-1.23, Scott 3207) which is listed in the 8th Edition of the Values List.

Note in the illustration above how the column of holes above the "snowman" is a bit to the right in comparison to the column of holes below the "snowman" that are a bit to the left. If the two sections of skiving dies were roughly aligned vertically but still overlapped by "one" hole, the result can be an extra-large hole rather than a snowman-like outline.

An example of this is amply shown on page 58 at bottom right in the April 2021 Coil Line on part of a (10¢) Lion (Scott 3769) PNC strip. In that article by Lynnette Wood, she also describes and illustrates "large holes" and "small holes" examples of that issue and of the (25¢) Diner coil (Scott 3208). — Editor

► Trivia Break (continued from page 11)

One has to stay with the core error behind the catalog entry of 2127c – a **color omitted** error, in this case of the **black** ink intended for the inscription.

Other color(s) hanging about for a "color omitted" might be interesting in their effect, but that's noise.

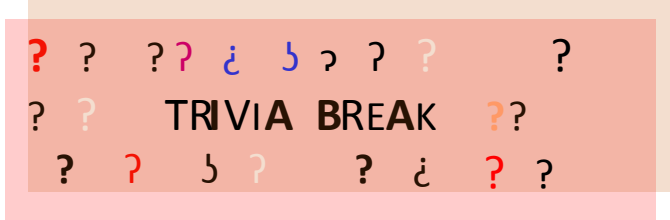
PNC collectors of the popular Transportation series also need to heed Scott's first sentence in its footnote, since similar "bi-color" coils in the series were likewise BEP-engraved: from a single printing

sleeve. The relative placement of elements is fixed, unlike inks applied by multiple sleeves or cylinders.

This allows comparing the vertical alignment of "N" in "Nonprofit" with "1" in "1920s", among the EFO at top of page 11 and the PNC #1s at bottom.

A true 2127c is of 2127a (with its serif font). As Robert stated, it is purportedly unique. We have no image but it likely has no lake ink in the "albino" impression. But Robert's EFO has a sans-serif font.

In addition to black spots, the certification experts failed to see the basic fact that his EFO is 2127b.



Doubt Cast on Certified 7.1¢ Tractor Error

by Ron Blanks

The December issue’s “Break” noted: “It is not often that true errors are still found among PNCs that were printed 35 years ago. While the 7.1¢ Tractor that Robert Thompson discovered and reported on page 11 has no plate number, it came from rolls with plate # 1.

“As you study the report on page 11, do you find anything odd, off or omitted?”

We were dubious that the December trivia question should even be raised. Already in mid-November, trouble was suspected of brewing with the 7.1¢ Tractor EFO (error, freak or oddity) that Robert reported on.

The fallout is reported on this page. But whether or not Robert’s coil was a genuine error, it seems almost everyone involved, especially the expertization committee, were sloppy describing it, whatever the “Scott #” is.

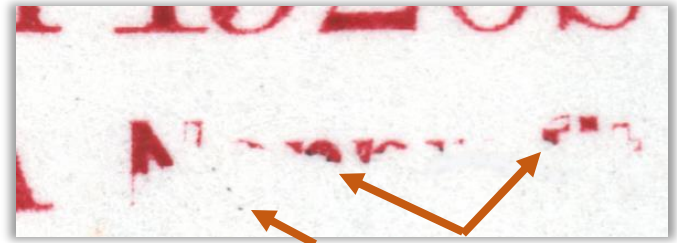
Before reading the answer later, see below the entry for the issue from a recent edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers*.

This and a re-reading of the December story should provide another chance at the answer... provided you pulled out your examples of 2127a and 2127b if you tackled this Trivia Break question before or now.

(We’ve almost given the answer now with the images at lower-right. Actual answer is at end of article.)

Two readers responded by press time, but not to the matter overlooked. One thought perhaps the lack of phosphor tagging for the precancels should be mentioned. Another reader remarked on the presence of lake ink in the precancel inscription, wanting to read “partially omitted” instead of “omitted” in the story.

But that lake ink was happenstance contamination. (Read Scott’s line for 2127c.) *(please see page 10)*



In the December 2022 *Coil Line*, Robert Thompson relayed what his Philatelic Foundation’s certificate stated about his submission of a possible Scott # 2127c (a 7.1¢ Tractor with black ink omitted):

“It is not Scott 2127Var rather it is 2127c with an albino impression of the precancel present as usual.”

However, in working with the image Robert sent, it seemed like there were black spots present in the precancel inscription “Nonprofit”.

Those of you receiving only December’s print edition were at a disadvantage. The digital edition can be enlarged on the screen and black spots viewed. A larger version of December’s cropped image is shown above, which might show the black spots in print.

When contacted about the possibility, Robert reviewed the actual stamp under magnification and noted, “There appear to be three small dots of black, but they are clear of where the letters are located, but still present.” I believe he refers to the specks at [A].

What I saw are two black dots near the top loop of “p”, and a spot at edge of the partial red-inked “f” [B]. The coil is a dramatic Freak or Oddity as an EFO. But to be an Error requires no trace of the “omitted” color.

<p>2127 A1510 7.1c lake, Feb. 6, 1987</p> <p>Pair P# strip of 5, #1 P# single, #1</p> <p>a. Untagged (Bureau precancel “Non-profit Org.” in black), Feb. 6, 1987 P# strip of 5, #1 P# single, #1</p> <p>b. Untagged (Bureau precancel “Non-profit 5-Digit Zip + 4” in black), May 26, 1989 P# strip of 5, #1 P# single, #1</p> <p>c. As “a,” black (precancel) omitted</p> <p>On Nos. 2127a and 2127b, both the vignette and the precancel inscription were printed from a single printing sleeve.</p> <p>On No. 2127c, an albino impression of the precancel is present.</p>	<p>7.1¢ Tractor entry in a recent Scott Specialized catalog.</p>
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(25¢) Bridges Presort Coil: A Commentary



Online posters were strangely quiet upon news from the U. S. Postal Service on Dec. 13, 2022 that revealed the above four new stamp designs. The stunning images of bridges are to be found on “mail use” stamps of the presorted First-Class category, available for sale at 25¢ each in coils of 3,000 and 10,000. (Details of the designs are in last month’s *Coil Line*. As of this writing, no release date is set. *Above image from USPS.*)

Bulk mailers can obtain certain levels of postage discounts, based on the extent of sorting and other work they do in mail preparation. The fewer steps remaining that the post office has to do, the more the discounts.

In recent years, we’ve seen the following types of firms, both commercial and otherwise, use presorted First-Class coils on mass mailings: Nonprofits and political parties to their higher-end donors, hearing aid marketers, “Life Line” health screeners, household survey solicitors, car dealers, and retirement facilities.

The upcoming stamps arrive against a backdrop of a noted discussion among some online posters in 2022: Quibbling about the source of artwork on commemorative stamps in recent years (both in U.S. and elsewhere). Some complain that stamps depicting little more than photographs reflect shortcuts in their design and production. This is seen as less noble than stamps requiring graphics skills, especially tailored to working on such miniature canvases, continuing the tradition of decades-old stamp design using custom art.

To our sense of U.S. stamp designs through the decades, the Bridges issue is a marked turning point for what remains as stamped mail. In these days of dwindling pay-bills-by-mail and fewer greeting cards mailed, beautifully rendered designs are relegated to commemoratives that the Postal Service expects to be “saved”.

Mail use stamps, especially coils, have mostly reflected simpler graphic designs (some downright minimalist especially in the presort coils and in the long-running “Flag” incarnations that come almost annually). Only in the last few years has a more natural rendition approach arisen, yet these designs are mostly all floral.

Now it seems the script has been upended. Save for the miniscule scale, the new Bridges set reflects the best photographic artistry previously seen only on large commemoratives. The irony is that the Bridges designs will now be seen by many more mail recipients than any forever-rate commemorative was.). — *Editor*



Mint strip of counterfeit “3 Flags 2022” coils with “plate #” P1111, believed first found
(see details, story on page 2)

PNC³ PNC Values List Order Form (February 2023)

The Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC³) is accepting orders for the **NEW 8th Edition of the PNC Values List** for plate number coil stamps which is one of the publications making up the overall PNC³ Catalog. This compilation contains median dealer prices for mint PS3, mint PS5, mint PS7 and longer strips, as well as for PNC used singles, and PNCs on cover. The values are listed in denomination order; the PNC-ID and Scott Catalogue numbers are shown. A separate section lists reported Purple Machine Cancels, Dramatic Die Cut Shifts, Table Top Die Cuts and imperforates. **(120 pages, including appendices.)**

This new Catalog chapter can be delivered electronically (.pdf format) or by printed copy. The electronic copy will be delivered by email within a few days of order receipt. The hard copy will be mailed soon after receipt of this order form. The indicated prices below include postage & handling for printed copy orders.

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