

Plate 'that fire destroyed' may be next Pumper find

By Ken Lawrence

Be on the lookout for rolls of 20¢ Fire Pumpers from Plates 1 and 2. They could be next to turn up.

Quantities of Plates 3 and 4 are now widely available, demonstrating that vault supplies weren't rotated very well, since those plates were among the earliest to press. They were canceled early also, on Feb. 16, 1982, the same date that Plate 1 was retired.

Plate 2 was canceled Jan. 8, 1982, after 241,235 impressions, yielding 4,342,230 PNCs, more than four times as many as were printed from Plates 12 and 14. It should not be a scarce number, and in used condition it isn't; but in mint strips it's the key to the Pumpers.

Partly that's because of the folk tale which holds that

"The trouble with the story is that it isn't true, at least it isn't for Plate 2."

Plate 2 was destroyed in a fire at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Philately thrives on ironic images, like airplanes flying upside down, so this was the PNC version, a fire wagon consumed in a blaze. The legend of Plate 2 was launched by Steve Esrati and endlessly recycled by him and other writers, including myself.

One of Esrati's accounts of the demise of Plate 2 appeared, for example, on Page 5 of *TPN* for February 1986, the first issue of this publication. The trouble with the story is that it isn't true, at least it isn't for Plate 2.

A fire did break out at 2:45 a.m. at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's annex building on March 5, 1982, damaging five of the Cottrell presses. Two of them were crippled so badly that they had to be scrapped, while two others were back in service within 72 hours.

Press 802, which suffered the worst damage, was being used to print 20¢ Fire Pumper coils when the fire broke out, but not from Plate 2, which, as we've seen, had been canceled almost two months earlier.

An early report about the

blaze in *Linn's* listed Plates 9 and 10 as the ones affected, but that turned out to be erroneous. Actually lost were Plates 7 and 8.

That may help to explain why those plate numbers have always seemed scarcer than the reported number of im-

pressions printed would seem to warrant. Probably a lot of Plate 7 and 8 production was lost to the fire and cleanup.

Other stamps that were being printed on that shift were the 20¢ Consumer Education coil, the 10.9¢ Hansom Cab coil, and the 13¢ Crazy Horse sheet stamp.

The May 1982 issue of *The United States Specialist* tells the whole story.

Prices off sharply after finds of Fire Pumper Plates 12, 14

By Stephen G. Esrati

I took the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* to the printer on April 29 because several ads were late. It was lucky for me!

On April 20, Plates 12 and 14 of the 20¢ Fire Pumper were found in large quantity by a collector in Indianapolis. The catalog had a \$300 price on them. It still does, but there is a warning notice that 6,000 strips of these rare strips had just been found.

The reason the catalog price

was not changed was because all catalog prices are based on dealers' sales prices. No strips from the new find had yet been put on sale when the catalog went to the printer, so the price stayed.

For the record, buying ads in *Linn's* that week (issue of May 2) for these strips carried prices in agreement with the catalog's retail price estimate. M&M/Southwest offered \$50 for a strip of three and \$190

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Paid circulation this issue is 323.

The Plate Number

Published six times a year by Stephen G. Esrati, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120-0130. Subscription price is \$10 a year (\$8 to members of PNC).

Entire contents Copyright © 1988 by Stephen G. Esrati.

Advertising rates: \$25 a quarter page (vertically or horizontally); \$45 a half page; \$80 a page. Other display ads are \$5 per column inch (1.75 inches wide).

Classified ads are 15 cents a word with no charge for your address.

TPN's Data Bank

From now on, The Plate Number will reprint parts of USPS information on new coil stamps. All text is that of USPS. Where text has been added or revised by TPN, it appears in brackets.

Conestoga Wagon

The vertically oriented stamp ... is based on a photo from the book, *Conestoga Wagon 1750-1850*, by George Shumway.

The stamp design shows a side-rear view of the wagon highlighting its characteristic features: the rounded bed with up-turned front and rear, the high side walls, oversized wheels, and extended wooden bows framing the canvas cover.

The artwork and typography appear in maroon. "Conestoga Wagon 1800s" stretches across the top of the stamp in two lines of serif type. "USA 3" appears to the left of the front of the wagon. The stamp, the first definitive issue of 1988, replaces the Cottrell-printed 3-cent Railroad Handcar issued in 1983.

This gracefully designed covered wagon takes its name from the community in which it was built. At first these wagons only carried furs and supplies between Lancaster County and Philadelphia. However, they soon became the primary tools for overland freight hauling to new settlements in the Ohio Valley.

The boat-like shape of the wagon was practical as well as attractive. The high front, rear and side walls helped in floating the wagon across deep streams as well as improving the wagon's handling and maneuverability, thereby smoothing out the hills, valleys and rocky mountain roads of westward expansion.

Issue Date: Feb. 29, 1988 (First U.S. stamp ever issued on "leap year day.")

First-day city: Conestoga, Pa.

Printing process: Intaglio (B Press, BEP)

Color: Maroon (PMS 209)

Size: 0.71 x 0.82 inches or 18.0 x 20.82mm (image area)
0.87 x 0.96 inches

or 22.09 x 24.38mm (overall)

Plate number: One single digit every 52nd stamp

Stamps per coil: 100, 500 and 3,000

"E" Stamp

The "E" stamp, the fifth non-denominated stamp produced by the Postal Service (*Editor's note: This statement is in error. The United States issued four lettered stamps as well as two undenominated 10-cent Christmas stamps in 1975*) breaks tradition from previous issues by featuring a dramatic and colorful view of the Earth from outer space. Blue oceans and burnt-orange North America peek through a tapestry of white clouds covering the planet. Outer space creates a spectacular backdrop of layered colors. A center band of brilliant yellow gradually yields to red and finally forms a frame of blue, punctuated by small white stars.

A white letter "E" looms in the upper left corner of the image, paralleled at lower left by the word, "Earth." "Domestic" appears in red beside "USA," in blue, on a white background below the stamp image.

... [T] he stamp is taken from an original painting based on composite photographs provided by the National Aeronautics [and] Space Administration (NASA). The subject, Earth, was chosen to correspond with the letter "E."

The stamps were produced over the last three years and stored pending their use with a future postage rate change.

The Postal Service emphasized that the "E" stamps are for use within the United States only. Their use is prohibited on international mail, which requires denominated postage.

Issue Date: March 22, 1988
First-day city: Washington, D.C.

Printing process: Gravure (BEP Andreotti Press)

Colors: Red, blue, yellow and black

Size: 0.71 x 0.82 inches or 18.03 x 20.82mm (image area)

0.87 x 0.96 inches or 22.1 x 24.4mm (overall)

Plate number: Four single digits [every 24th stamp]

Stamps per coil: 100, 500 and 3,000

Flag Over Yosemite

The stamp features the U.S. Flag in the top half of the stamp, billowing over Half Dome, Yosemite's most striking example of glacier-carved granite. The famous vertical cliff face appears in an icy blue, climbing dramatically from a dense blue-green forest of ponderosa pines, which stand guard along the still waters of the Merced River. The pines grow in size and proximity toward the right of the stamp until the tree tops nearly touch the tip of Old Glory.

"USA 25" appears in the lower right, stacked in white serif lettering against the foliage. The word "Yosemite," is printed in dark green serif type along the bottom left of the image.

Issue date: May 20, 1988

First-day city: Yosemite, Calif.

Printing process: Intaglio (B Press, BEP)

Colors: Red (PMS 185U), blue (PMS 2995U) and green (PMS 562U)

Size: 0.71 x 0.82 inches or 18.0 x 20.8mm (image area)
0.87 x 0.96 inches or 22.1 x 24.4mm (overall)

Plate number: One single digit every 52nd stamp

Stamps per coil: 500 and 3,000

Penalty stamps

Like the "E" Series (non-denominated) Penalty Mail issues, [15¢, 20¢ and 25¢] stamps are being printed entirely by offset lithography on pre-phosphored paper. The stamps carry no plate numbers, and are being produced only in coils of 100.

Popcorn Wagon

The 16.7-cent precanceled stamp will be popular with mailers ... because the denomination represents the basic bulk mail rate. More than 500 million such stamps are purchased each year.

FDC Totals

2T1B	Re-engraved Locomotive	169,484
5T1B	Milk Wagon	162,571
7.1T1	Tractor	*167,555
8.5T1	Tow Truck	*224,285
10T1	Canal Boat	171,952
17.5T1	Racing Car	*162,571
22T1T	Test coil	151,686
*(tagged and precanceled)		

Updated schedule of 1988 PNC stamps

(Stamps are listed by tentative date of issue. A "P" means the stamp will be issued only as a precancel.)

25¢	Flag Over Yosemite — May 20, Yosemite, CA
10.1¢	Oil Wagon, new precancel — June 27, Washington, D.C. P
16.7¢	Popcorn Wagon — July 7, Chicago IL. P
15¢	Tugboat — July 12.
13.2¢	Railroad Coal Car — July 19, Pitsburgh, PA. P
8.4¢	Wheelchair — Aug. 12, Tucson, AZ. P
21¢	Railroad Mail Car — Aug. 16, Santa Fe, NM. P
20¢	Cable Car — Aug. 30, San Francisco, CA.
7.5¢	Carreta — Aug. 30, San Jose, CA. P
5.3¢	Elevator — Sept. 16, New York, NY. P
20.5¢	Fire Engine — Sept. 28, San Angelo, TX. P
24.1¢	Tandem Bike — Oct. 26, Redmond, WA. P
13¢	Police Patrol Wagon — Oct. 29, Anaheim, CA. P
25¢	Honeybee — Postponed.

Note: Some of these dates and first-day sites are revised from those previously reported.

Popcorn Wagon rolls into Chicago

TPN's Data Bank(cont.)

The design ... uses a profile of the Cretors Number 1 Wagon, Model 1902. A glass case at the right encloses [Charles C.] Cretors' now-familiar popcorn pan, suspended above a mound of freshly popped produce. Under the canopy, his toy "Rosty Tosty" clown dances above the cylindrical peanut roaster.

"Popcorn Wagon" is centered atop of the stamp in serif type, above "1902" at flush right, and "16.7 USA" at flush left. Both the vignette and text are printed in a ruddy red. The precanceling endorsement, "Bulk Rate," runs vertically along the left side of the coil stamp and is printed in black. Like the image and text, the Bulk Rate endorsement is printed intaglio.

...[I]n 1885, Mr. Cretors snatched the snack right out of the flames. Using a steam engine that also roasted peanuts, he cooked his popcorn in a heated mixture of butter, lard and salt.

Passersby his Chicago confection shop stopped to look at the new-fangled contraption and to watch the toy "Rosty

Tosty" man dance around while the peanuts and popcorn cooked. However, they soon discovered that the real treat was in the eating.

After refining his steam-powered popper in various stationary models, Cretors designed his Number 1 Wagon and literally took popcorn to the streets of America.

Issue Date: July 7, 1988.

First-day city: Chicago, Ill.
Printing process: intaglio (BEP B Press)

Colors: Red 186U (vignette, type), black 701B (Bulk rate endorsement)

Size: 0.71 x 0.82 inches
or 18.0 x 20.8mm (image area)
0.87 x 0.98 inches
or 22.1 x 24.4mm (overall)

Plate number: One single digit every 52nd stamp

Stamps per coil: 500 and 3,000 (precanceled only).

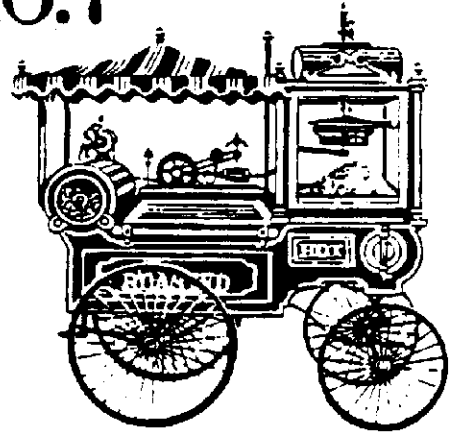
New issues

Data on the 101c Oil Wagon with red precancel, 15c Tugboat, and 13.2c Railroad Coal Car were too late for this issue of TPN.

They'll appear next month.

Popcorn Wagon 16.7 USA 1902

Bulk Rate



Lighthouse albums

I carry a full line of Lighthouse PNC albums.

PS3, PS5, PS7

Cottrell issues to 1985 \$158.00
Other presses from 1981 82.00

Singles

Cottrell issues to 1985 \$36.50
Other presses from 1981 39.00

Binders

Perfect (2 post) \$51.00
Excellent (13 ring) 52.00
Slip case 24.00

My usual discount of 10% applies to purchases over \$100. 5% more off to members of PNC³. (In Ohio add 7%.)

Stephen G. Esratl
P.O. Box 20130
Shaker Heights, OH 44120-0130
☎ (216) 561-9393

Plate Coil Exposé

• Issue # 1 appeared in April 1988. It was well received; collectors were interested in dealer infighting, market manipulations, and a host of other topics.

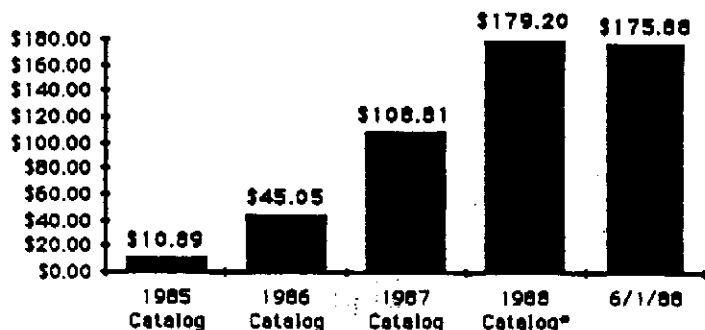
• It has been continued as a quarterly. The next issue is due in mid-July. If you want to read the inside story from "someone who was there" on the finds of 12, 14 Pumpers; if you want to hear how an organized effort to search almost 20,000 post offices for off-sale items is occurring; if you want my views of the future of mint plate number single and pair collecting; if you want to know some personal facts about the backgrounds and lives of some of the major players in coil number philately; if you want to learn how to search for and identify the 17¢ mint Auto 5-6 without opening the rolls; if you want lots more information, you should subscribe now.

- \$7.50 enclosed for Issue # 1.
- \$20.00 enclosed for Issues #1 - 4.
- \$20.00 enclosed for Issues #2 - 5.
- \$24.00 enclosed for Issues #1 - 5.

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz
37-E Stanwick Place
Stamford, CT 06905

TPN Average dips after find of Fire Pumpers 12 and 14

TPN Average



* Revised from last issue due to last-minute catalog revisions.

ADLETS

Classified ads are 15 cents a word. There is no charge for your address. Members of PNC3 are entitled to one free adlet a year up to 25 words.

17¢ AUTO, Plates 3-4 BA VF. Max variety 'Hole in D' strips of 10. Both \$50 or trade. Wayne Chevery, RD 2, Box 2035, Dexter, ME 04930. (5-88)

USED TRANSPORTATION COILS

Hottest thing on the market. Challenging and inexpensive. Buying and selling or trading. Price lists for SASE. Max Hickox, Box 21081, Denver, Colo. 80221.

JOIN PNC1! Get valuable discounts from dealers. Send SASE to Eric Russow, P.O. Box 17374, Whitefish Bay WI 53217. Dues are \$10 a year.

BUY-SELL! lots. Plate strips, 5-8s, EFCs, top numbers, Hawaiian precancels. 20¢ Fire Pumpers #12, #14 LNSs VFs. P.O.R. Write soon, don't delay. W. H. Ruzler, 14526 Sherman Way #1821, Van Nuys, CA 91405.

BUYING PNC FDS. Write first. Thomas Gift, 1958 Haviland Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10472 (4-98)

ALL BACK ISSUES of TPN are available. Please send a SASE for an order blank. Eszari, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

ADVERTISERS: Please inform TPN if you give special discounts to members of the Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC1).

BUYING used PNC singles. D. Vardavas, P.O. Box 4261, Warren, OH 44482.

PNC CATALOG, 4th edition, 80 pages, lavishly illustrated, \$15 (\$18.05 in Ohio). Eszari, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. PNC1 members get \$1 off (to \$14.98 in Ohio).

DONATE a 1988 PNC catalog to a philatelic library, only \$12 if sent directly to library. Even APRIL lacks 1987 and 1988 issues!

1T1, 2C split numbers, \$1 each with SASE. 11T18 Brake Shoe variety, \$10 single, \$15 pair. 9.3T1 or 9.3T2 average \$4. Fine \$10, VF \$12. PNC3-10%. Red Raider Stamps, 4123 W 18th, Lubbock, TX 79418-8008.

HELP TPN! Tell advertisers you saw their ad in TPN.

WEST GERMANY, BERLIN, new issue service: singles, coils, first-day panels, postal stationery. All at 15% over face against deposit. Tell me at what point you want to start. Scott or Michel numbers. Steve Eszari, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

Discovery of large quantities of 20T12 and 20T14 is reflected in this month's TPN Average, which declined by 4.20 points.

The decline would have been more severe had it not been for dramatic increases in several other elements of the average, particularly 5.9T6P.

[**Bold-faced numbers indicate that this stamp is included in the TPN Average.**]

That 5.9¢ precancel is listed in the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* for a VF strip of five at \$45.

Recent ads for F-VF by Stamps 'n' Stuff (SNS) price it at \$80. Dr. Robert Rabinowitz lists it at \$60 (also for F-VF).

The catalog adds 20% to those prices for an estimate of VF. That is also the premium charged by Dr. Rabinowitz for VF. SNS has a similar 20% surcharge.

Analysis of recent dealer offerings pinpoint the following stamps as starting to show price increases:

- 21.1L2 and 21.1L2P, the 111121 plate of the Letters stamps.

- 18M1, the 1121 plate, tagged, of the 18¢ Monument.

- 22F3, Plate 3 of the 22¢ Flag, which SNS sells at \$25, as does Dr. Rabinowitz. Dale Enterprises advertised it in April at \$12.50. H&H Stamp & Coin erroneously listed it at \$7, but the real price is \$28.

- 9.3T8P, Plate 8 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon, which SNS sells at \$84 and Dr. Rabinowitz at \$75. SNS's buying ads offer \$40 for this strip.

Prices have continued to decline moderately on the two officials, 20c1 and

22c1, both of which had begun to decline before publication of the catalog.

20c1, which had been put back into postal stocks after the recent rate hike, has now been withdrawn and replaced by an offset stamp that does not show a plate number.

Several 17¢ Electric Auto stamps have been creeping up recently, especially the Typeface C precancel on Plates 5 and 7 and all Typeface B precancels.

Most dealers priced the Earth stamps equally for all four numbers, but Dr. Rabinowitz set a higher price on Plate 1121. Dale Enterprises puts higher prices on 1121 and 2222. This may be a sign that these plates may become scarcer.

And nobody is charging \$48 for a used single of 20F6, which has a wrong price in the catalog. That price should be 50 cents for a used single. It was entered in error as \$48 when the pair price was to be lowered from \$50 to \$48.

Please correct your catalog according to the corrections and additions listed on Page 64 of this issue of TPN.

The TPN Average is automatically updated every time one of the dealers whose price lists is used changes his prices. This means that the average lags behind real prices since it will include some outdated prices.

For the 12-14 Pumpers, however, pre-find prices have simply been ignored.

Surplus PNCs?

We are able to offer your material at auction or purchase outright for cash. Auction fee is 10% of hammer price, \$10 lot minimum. Ship your surplus today for our offer/recommendation, or sale at auction.

Sam Houston Philatelics
13310 Westheimer #150, Houston, Tx. 77077



(713) 493-6386 (800) 231-5926

Reports on research in progress

4.9¢ Double Gaps

Since the first detailed workup on the double-gap varieties of the 4.9¢ Buckboard (TPN, January 1988) by Kim Cuniberti, several collectors have gone to work to try to plate the issue.

Rocco Caponi of Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, made a fortunate find that may move the research along. He found several rolls from Plates 3 and 4 that were badly cut. That meant the plate numbers were split.

While this may detract from their interest to most people, to a plater this was paradise.

Caponi was able to lay out strips of stamps in which the joint line and the plate number splits could be matched.

This yielded the following result:

Top row: Break in both precancel lines. (Type IIa, blunt ends on lines)

Second row: Break in top line only. (Type IIc)

Third row: Break in bottom line only. (Type Ib)

Fourth row: Break in both lines. (Type IIa)

Fifth row: Normal stamp, no breaks in lines.

Gerald Clark, who did the plating on Plates 3 and 4 of the 17¢ Auto from the A and B style precancels, has come to the same conclusions as Caponi about the 4.9s, Caponi said.

5.2¢ Sleigh

Howard Moser has found some very strange-looking mat varieties on the 5.2¢ Sleigh precancel.

On one of them, the right end of the top precancel line droops, like this:



Moser showed them to George Godin

who confirmed that the variety is constant because Moser has 25 identical copies.

The other variety is a double. The top line has a diagonal break going toward the upper right. The bottom line has a gouge just below that break, like this:



Said Godin: "The condition of the 'gouge' appears to be metal disintegrating. Moser has it as a very small notch and then getting progressively larger."

Correction

Part of Kim Cuniberti's ad on Page 25 of the 1988 PNC Catalog was lost in the computer. A corrected version appears below.

KIM CUNIBERTI, APS

RARE PLATE NUMBER STRIPS!!!

Some available nowhere else

Cottrell Gap Strips:

- * 10.9 #3,4 Gap 4R, 4L
- * 9.3 #2,4 Gap 3L (on Type II paper)
- * 10.9 #1,2 Gap 3R
- * 9.3 #3,4 Gap 4L
- * 5.2 #3,5 Gap 2L, 1L and Line Gap

Constant Plate Varieties:

- * 10.9 #2 Low Cab at 2L
- * 4.9 #1,3,4 with various low entries
- * 4.9 Rain Crack, Split 6, Rein Whip and Buggy Whip
- * 8.3 Low 1 Varieties

Numbers on Top:

- * 17 #3,4 Type C (Gap 3L)
- * 17 #3,4 Type BA (Gap 4R)
- * 17 #5 Type AB (Gap 5R)

Largest Inventories of:

- * 4.9 Double Gap (all 5 known types)
- * B Press Gap Strips (some within PS/5!)
- * Paper Types (incl. 17¢ C #3/4 on Ty II)
- * I also stock every known plate # strip from 1¢ #1 to rare 18¢ Flag #6!

Imperf Plate Number Strips:

Send 45¢ #10 SASE and tell what you're looking for. I can make the impossible Possible!

CONTEMPORARY COILS

P.O. BOX 3654

DANBURY, CT 06813-3654

Scott singles album: nice, but...

Scott Publishing Co. has released its *Comprehensive Plate Number Coils Singles Album*.

It's nice—but...

Scott has made an effort to put all stamps of the same design on the same page. That leaves an awful lot of empty space on some pages.

It works fine with the 13 plates of the 20¢ Flag plus one precancel. That fills the page. It does not work with the four plates of the Consumer Education, strung out across the top of an otherwise empty page.

It gets really sad on the two numbered official stamps, each given a page to itself.

Scott is to be congratulated for getting away from the format it has used for many years in its National Album for U.S. stamps. This album has pages measuring 8.5 by 11 inches, with a mounting area measuring 6.75 by 9.75 inches. The ugly border used on its Specialty albums has been replaced by a neat, modern border, and the page is punched for a standard three-ring binder with round holes.

No one at Scott today could explain why older albums were punched with a rectangular hole that could not be strengthened with the doughnut-shaped reinforcements available in all five-and-dime stores.

Each page is illustrated with the basic stamp in one space and with the necessary data in other spaces. Scott numbers are used and precancels are described.

There are no spaces for the B Press version of the 12¢ Stanley Steamer precancel or the 14¢ Iceboat.

The arrangement of the precancels of the 17¢ Electric Auto is by plate number, not by typeface style. That means the four boxes on the first row read 17T1Pc, 17T2Pc, 17T3Pa, 17T3Pb.

The next row is 17T3Pc, 17T4Pa, 17T4Pb, 17T4Pc.

For those of us who want a page to tell the viewer what he or she is looking at, this has a huge drawback. Once the fields are filled by stamps, one must lift up the stamps to read how they differ from each other (assuming one is using hinges; with mounts, the text would be

TPN reviews

hidden forever).

Wouldn't it have been nice to have some text outside the boxes to describe the stamps more fully? By grouping Type A under a caption saying "Type A, 'PRESORTED' 13 1/2mm long" that problem could have been avoided.

Scott also errs in saying that both lines of text in the precancel, "PRESORTED" and "FIRST CLASS," are 13 1/2mm long. They're not and checking with any knowledgeable PNC collector would have avoided that error.

There are still a few typographical er-

rors in the album. The unprecanceled 18M3, for example, is described as having the plate number "33333," when it is, in reality, "3333."

It is difficult to judge the album's time frame. It has spaces for Plates 1 and 2 of the 5.5¢ Star Route Truck precancel and the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon, but does not for Plate 2 of the 8.3¢ Ambulance (B Press) or 12.5¢ Pushcart.

The album is quite good, despite these shortcomings because they can all be corrected in updates. One would hope that Scott will seriously consider some change for the 17¢ Autos.

The greatest thing about the album is its price. It retails at \$9.95.

sgc

First Day Covers

I carry House of Farnam first-day covers bearing PNCs.

Covers of the 3¢ Conestoga Wagon are available at \$5 each. The 25¢ "E" stamps will be available shortly. The House of Farnam did not produce covers with all four plate-number combinations of the "E" stamps, but I will have those it serviced. (ArtCraft and Artmaster FDCs are \$4 each.)

I offer PNC FDCs on a subscription basis. All covers have strips of five with the plate number in the middle.

To subscribe, send \$25 and I will mail out covers as they arrive. (You will have to be patient, but you will be complete on Farnam covers.) My prices are competitive.

I also have older FDCs. Write for my free list. Please enclose a SASE.

Stephen G. Esrati

P.O. Box 20130

Shaker Heights, OH 44120-0130

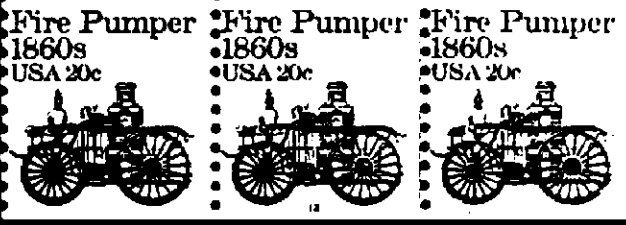
☎ (216) 561-9393

TRANSPORTATION COILS

Special

#12 & #14 Fire Pumper

Line Pair \$20.00



	LP	PS3	PS5
1897 1e Omnibus 1, 2, 5, 8.....	.30	.50	.55
3, 4.....	.40	.65	.70
2225 1e B Press 1.....	.40	.65	.70
1897A Loco 3, 4, 8, 10.....	.40	.50	.55
2, 6.....	.50	.70	.75
2228 Loco B Press.....	.50	.70	.75
1898 Handcar 1, 2.....	.50	.70	.90
3, 4.....	.50	1.20	1.25
2123 3.4e Bus 1, 2.....	.50	.80	1.00
Precancel 1, 2.....	.70	.90	1.00
1898A 4e Coach 3, 4.....	.90	1.20	1.25
5, 8.....	1.10	1.35	1.45
1, 2.....	1.00	1.40	1.50
Precancel 3, 4, 5, 6.....	1.10	1.60	1.70
2228 4e B Press.....	.90	.90	1.00
2124 4.9e Suckboard 3, 4.....	.90	1.10	1.20
Precancel 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.....	1.25	1.30	1.50
2255 5e Milk Wagon 1.....	1.00	1.30	1.50
1899 5e Motorcycle 1, 2.....	.90	1.00	1.40
3, 4.....	1.30	1.80	1.80
1900 5.2e Sleigh 1, 2.....	4.75	7.25	8.00
3, 5.....	74.00	75.00	79.00
1900A 6.2e Precancel 1, 2.....	4.50	6.00	7.00
3, 4, 5, 6.....	7.00	8.00	8.75
2125 6.5e Truck 1.....	.90	1.30	1.50
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.00	1.40	1.50
1901 5.9e Bicycle 3, 4.....	6.00	10.75	12.00
Precancel 3, 4.....	10.00	11.00	11.50
5, 6.....	75.00	78.75	80.00
2126 8e Tricycle 1.....	1.00	1.45	1.50
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.25	1.75	1.90
2127 7.1e Truck 1.....	1.20	1.60	1.75
Precancel 1.....	1.00	1.50	1.90
1902 7.4e Buggy 2.....	6.00	8.75	9.75
Precancel 2.....	2.50	2.70	2.85
2128 8.3e Ambulance 1, 2.....	1.25	1.60	1.85
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.00	1.50	1.75
3, 4.....	3.00	3.50	3.70
2231 B Press 1, 2.....	1.20	1.75	1.90
2129 8.5e Truck 1.....	1.00	1.75	1.90
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.20	1.85	2.00
1903 9.3e Mail Wagon 1, 2.....	7.00	9.50	12.00
3, 4.....	12.00	19.00	25.00
5, 6.....	—	170.00	175.00
Precancel 1, 3.....	18.00	19.00	20.00
5, 6.....	3.00	3.70	4.70
2, 4.....	10.00	11.00	12.50
8.....	75.00	82.00	94.00
2258 10e Boat.....	1.20	1.70	1.90
2130 10.1e Oil 1.....	1.00	1.75	2.00
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.70	2.00	2.75
1904 10.9e Cab 1, 2.....	12.00	14.00	19.00
Precancel 1, 2.....	8.00	14.00	17.00
3, 4.....	40.00	395.00	495.00
1905 11e Caboose 1.....	3.50	4.00	5.00
Precancel 1.....	2.75	3.00	3.50
2131 11e Bearcat 1, 2, 3, 4.....	1.00	1.50	1.70
2132 12e Steamer 1, 2.....	1.25	1.75	1.95
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.50	1.75	1.95
B Press 1.....	2.25	2.50	3.00

	LP	PS3	PS5
2132 12.5e Push Cart 1.....	1.50	2.00	2.15
Precancel 1, 2.....	1.50	2.75	3.00
2134 14e Iceboat 1, 2, 3, 4.....	1.00	1.40	1.60
B Press 2.....	1.80	2.00	2.20
1908 17e Auto 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.....	2.00	2.70	3.00
6.....	16.75	17.00	18.00
7.....	4.50	5.70	7.00
Precancel A 3, 4, 5, 6.....	5.00	6.00	6.50
Type A 7.....	8.75	9.00	10.00
Type B 3, 4.....	22.00	25.00	30.00
Type B 5, 6.....	9.75	10.00	12.00
Type C 1, 2.....	9.00	11.00	12.00
Type C 3, 4.....	5.00	6.00	7.00
Type C 5, 7.....	12.50	18.00	19.00
2135 17e Cogged 2.....	2.00	2.50	2.70
2264 17.5e 1.....	2.25	2.70	3.50
Precancel 1.....	2.50	3.00	3.75
1907 18e Survey 1.....	12.00	48.00	70.00
2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10.....	2.00	3.50	3.70
3, 4, 7.....	12.00	24.75	25.00
11, 12, 13, 14.....	—	—	—
15, 16, 17, 18.....	4.00	7.50	7.75
1908 20e Pumper 1.....	8.00	45.00	175.00
2.....	60.00	210.00	975.00
3, 4, 5, 9, 10.....	3.00	3.50	4.00
7, 8.....	40.00	60.00	73.00
6, 13, 15, 16.....	3.50	4.50	5.00
12, 14.....	20.00	24.00	25.00
11.....	25.00	28.50	30.00
2136 25e Breadwagon 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.....	2.50	3.50	4.00
1991 18e Flag 1.....	75.00	130.00	490.00
2.....	17.00	22.00	30.00
3.....	—	325.00	800.00

	LP	PS3	PS5
4.....	5.00	5.75	6.50
5.....	4.50	5.50	6.00
6 XF Only, net.....	—	1.550	2.200
7.....	20.00	19.00	20.00
1895 20e Flag 1.....	7.00	9.00	70.00
2, 3.....	4.00	5.75	10.00
4.....	45.00	49.00	180.00
6.....	35.00	45.00	70.00
6, 9, 10, 12.....	4.50	5.50	10.00
8.....	6.50	7.00	13.00
13, 14.....	4.50	5.50	6.00
Precancel 14.....	5.50	6.50	7.00
2115 22e Flag 1.....	6.00	9.00	11.00
3.....	20.00	24.00	25.00
6.....	8.50	8.00	10.00
2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, T1.....	3.00	4.00	4.25
7, 11, 13, 14, 17, 20.....	6.00	7.00	8.00
NEW! 25e Flag.....	3.00	3.50	4.25
2149 18e Wash. 1112.....	2.50	3.00	3.50
3333.....	2.20	2.75	3.00
Precancel 33333.....	2.20	2.70	3.00
Precancel 11121.....	4.50	5.00	5.50
2005 Consumer 1, 2.....	4.00	40.00	170.00
3, 4.....	4.00	37.00	110.00
2150 21.1e 111111.....	2.75	3.20	3.50
111121.....	3.00	4.00	4.50
Precancel 111111.....	2.25	3.00	3.50
111121.....	4.50	5.00	5.50
O135 20e Official 1.....	15.00	22.00	50.00
O139 22e "D" Official 1.....	20.00	22.00	55.00
2112 22e "D" Eagle 1, 2.....	3.75	4.00	6.00
NEW! "E" Earth 1111, 1211, 1222, 2222.....	2.50	3.50	3.95

TERMS: Payment with order. Prices subject to change without notice. Will take U.S. postage at face in trade. Precancels at 90%. All coils in stock. Single plate # coils available at pair price minus one stamp. Average coils available on better items, please send for list.

DISCOUNT: Deduct 5% on orders over \$50. 10% on orders over \$100. Discount doesn't apply on postage trades. Additional 5% on orders of 5 or more of any number for investors or dealers.

CONDITION: F-VF, Never Hinged. If you require VF-XF add 20% to List. Add 50% for Superb

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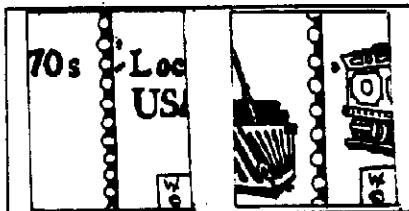
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Keeping your 1988 PNC catalog up to date

New Stamps:

- 1T2B—Plate 2, 1c Omnibus, B Press (interval 52). About April 15. (Godin)
 25T2—Plate 2, 25c Bread Wagon, C/D Press (interval 48).
 25T3—Plate 3, 25c Bread Wagon, C/D Press (interval 48). (Bellamy)
 25T4—Plate 4, 25c Bread Wagon, C/D Press (interval 48). April 26. (Sandford)
 25T5—Plate 5, 25c Bread Wagon, B Press (interval 52). May. (Rabinowitz, Hill)
 25F1—Plate 1, 25c Flag Over Yosemite. B Press (interval 52). Issued May 20.
 25F2—Plate 2 of the 25c Flag Over Yosemite. B Press (interval 52). Issued May 20. (Potkewitz)



coal falling from tender on stamp in the row of stamps above. They are seen between the 'L' of 'Locomotive' and the joint line."

Page 22: Gap 2R has been found on 9.3T5P-6P on Paper I by Larry G. Haynes and Dr. John Greenwood.

Page 35: 25T2 has been found imperforate. Rolls of 25T3 have, too, but no strips with a number were imperforate.

Page 37: 25E1111 has been found imperforate by Kirk Nichols. Dr. Greenwood reports that 25E1211 has also been found imperforate.

Catalog corrections:

Page 3: The used single price is wrong for 20F6. It should be 50 cents. The mint pair price for 20F6 should be \$48. The used single prices are also wrong

on 20F1 (should be 40 cents) and 20F11 (should be \$1.50).

Page 18: Clarification is needed on the paper types of 6T1, 6T1P and 6T2P. The catalog is imprecise.

Page 39: The "dull gum" Washington Monument stamp described as being on Type I paper should have been termed "a gravure paper resembling Type I paper."

Page 42: The gap scarcity table says only one find is known of Gap 1R of 10.9T3-4. There have been several recent finds of that gap.

Page 45: In the FDC scarcity table, the "17.c Racing Car" should be "17.5c."

Catalog updates:

The prices on 20T12 should be as follows for VF:

Used single:	\$5.00
Pair:	\$6.00
Strip of three:	\$25.00
Strip of five:	\$35.00

The prices on 20T14 should be as follows for VF:

Used single:	\$6.00
Pair:	\$7.50
Strip of three:	\$30.00

Catalog additions:

Page 9: Illustrations for the plate varieties on 2T8, Plate 8 of the 2c Locomotive, arrived too late for inclusion in the catalog. They are shown at the right, above:

As may be seen, the second variety is misdescribed in the catalog. The description should read: "Two lumps of



As the acme of their research and development, Lighthouse are now in a position to offer collectors of tagged and untagged (precanceled) STRIP format PNCs:

(a) All-inclusive, fully illustrated hingeless sets of pages with double-seam mounts that will hold — whatever you have or prefer — either PS 3 or PS 5 PNCs;

(b) individual spaces for the usual -collectable- gap and/or mat positions;

(c) and on top of all that, extra long PS 7+ spaces and mounts to even accommodate 3L and 2R gaps.

There are two sets of pages for the whole range of PNC stripes, viz:

53 PNC/1 SF: off COTTRELL press, with -Joint Line-, regulars overall tagged, 1981—1985

53 PNC/2 SF: B, C/D & ANDREOTTI PNCs, w/o. joint line, regulars block tagged, 1981 to date.

Additionally, there are sets of pages as well for PNC SINGLES, again both tagged and untagged. These can, moreover, also be had as -regular pages (without mounts)- and, of course, as -SF-Hingeless pages (with mounts)-, i. e.

53 CS/1 or 53 CS/1 SF: off COTTRELL press, with -Joint Line-, reg. overall tagged, 1981—1985

53 CS/2 or 53 CS/2 SF: off other presses, w/o. Joint Line, reg. block tagged, 1981 to date.

Originally, these pages were meant for USED singles. But, obviously, there seem to be quite a number of collectors, too, who save PNC MINT singles (see STAMP COLLECTOR of 11/28/87, page 20, -Modern Stamp Collecting-).

The aforementioned sets of pages are suitably inserted in either a
 DP-53: Lighthouse PERFECT 2-post turn-bar Binder with -USA- on spine, or
 DE-red: Lighthouse EXCELLENT 13-ring Binder (w/o. name of country on spine).

KA-red: matching Slip Case for either one of the aforementioned binders.

It is a matter of personal preference whether to choose a PERFECT or an EXCELLENT binder. In view of the lengths of particularly the PS 7 spaces and mounts, the editors feel inclined to recommend the DE-red binder for items 53 PNC/1 & 2 SF, since the pages usually get bent less when being turned over.

Supplements: PARTS 2 of the STRIP and SINGLE format albums will be up-dated by annual supplements (or possibly only every other year depending on the number of new PNC issues during any one year).

Summary	Period	No. of Pages	Regular Pages without mounts	SF-Hingeless Pages with mounts
PNC PS 3/PS 5/PS 7 (Regulars & Precancels)				
Part 1: COTTRELL press/joint line/reg. overall tagged	1981/85	62	—	53 PNC/1 SF US\$ 158.00
Part 2: Other presses/no joint line/reg. block tagged	from 1981	32	—	53 PNC/2 SF US\$ 82.00
PNC Singles (Regulars & Precancels)				
Part 1: COTTRELL press/joint line/reg. overall tagged	1981/85	13	53 CS/1 US\$ 18.50	53 CS/1 SF US\$ 38.50
Part 2: Other presses/no joint line/reg. block tagged	from 1981	14	53 CS/2 US\$ 19.50	53 CS/2 SF US\$ 39.00
PERFECT 2-post turn-bar Binder with -USA- on spine			DP-53 US\$ 51.00	
EXCELLENT 13-ring Binder (without name of country on spine)			DE-red US\$ 52.00	
SLIP CASE			KA-red US\$ 24.00	

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Plate cracks: To be continued

By Larry G. Haynes

When two stamps from different coil rolls share a plate crack or plate variety, the continuation has usually been discovered after the original variety.

Here is a discussion of several such continuations in order of increasing denomination:

The 1¢ Omnibus continuation crack at 2L of Plate 3 is relatively easy to see. It consists of multiple cracks at the top of the 2L stamp. One of these cracks continues upward into the next row. There it shows up as a very small crack at the bottom on the right side of the 2L stamp. Both varieties are illustrated in the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog*.

The 2¢ Locomotive continuation crack occurs on the stamp with the plate number of Plate 3. It consists of the "smoking t," a dark crack that runs from the top of the "t" of "Locomotive" to the top of the stamp. The crack continues into the row above, into the "3." The crack in the upper row is called the "bleeding 3." Usually, the "bleeding 3" is faint, but can be seen with 8X or 12X magnification.

The 4.9¢ Buckboard "Rain Crack" continuation is probably the most outstanding ever discovered. It occurs on the numbered stamp of Plate 5.

The "Rain Crack" is a remarkable stress crack consisting of 30 to 40 tiny cracks that remind one of rainfall. The cracks "flow" from the word "Buckboard" of one stamp down into the word "Buckboard" of the stamp below.

Cracks on both stamps are highly visible to the naked eye.

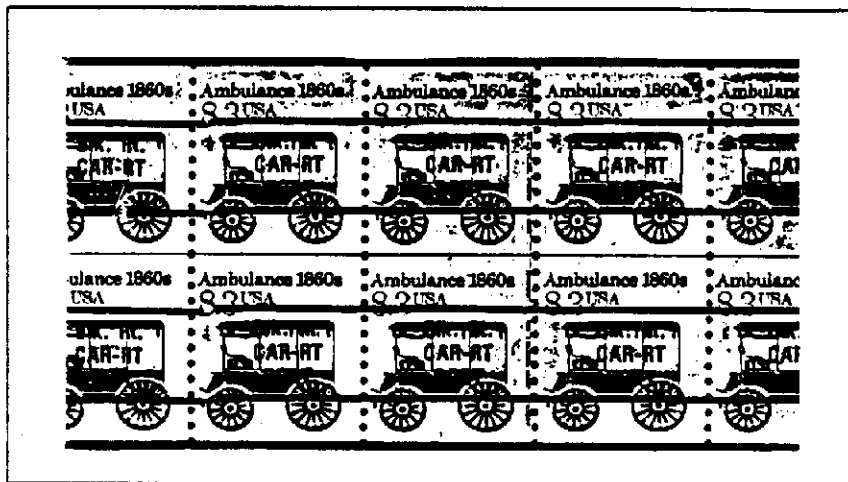
A bonus on this variety is that the precancel gap at 2R has a double gap in both precancel lines on the "Rain Crack" and a double gap in the top line.

Essentially, all these strips have cut numbers or numbers that touch the bottom of the stamp. A few full-number copies exist, but are considered rare.

The 8.3¢ Ambulance has the plate number "1" on the top row of the printing plate engraved lower and farther to the right than the normal number "1" on

The accompanying illustration shows the misplaced "1" cut, partly appearing on the top of the stamp below.

The top and second row of the web form a set of continuation strips.



This picture allows one to understand more clearly the various EFO combinations on the misplaced "1."

For example, if the cutting knife were raised about 1mm, the misplaced "1" would be left full at the top of the second row. The top row would be left with no number at all, and the second row would be left with two full numbers!

If the cutting knife were lowered by about 2mm, the top row would be left with a full misplaced "1" at the bottom.

These three varieties are excellent collector's items; and the varieties associated with cutting through the misplaced "1" as shown in the illustration are also sought after.

The two strips shown have another important characteristic. They are perfectly matched. Together they actually form a part of the web. This can be proved by matching the cutting lines and the bright fibers (under high magnification and long-wave ultraviolet light, respectively). A truly unique find.

The last continuation crack is that of the "smoking g" and the "bleeding 3" on Plate 3 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon. It is similar in concept to the 2¢ Locomotive's continuation crack.

The crack runs up from the "g" of the

"Wagon" into the "3" of the row above. Both cracks are usually very faint, but can be readily seen under 8X to 10X magnification.

There is another known continuation crack on the 4.9¢ Buckboard—a "smoking a" running up into a "bleeding 6" (shown in the 1988 catalog); and another is known on the 18¢ Surrey—a "smoking y" continuing up into a "bleeding 1." (The latter is called a "lightning bolt" in the 1988 catalog, but the continuation is not illustrated.)

Finding continuation strips is not easy; but the excitement of finding a set, especially a perfect match, makes up for time spent hunting for them.

There are probably many more out there, awaiting discovery.

So, Happy Hunting!

3¢ Conestoga Wagon may have 5-row crack

The crack at 11L on the 3¢ Conestoga Wagon may be a beauty!

The basic flaw was illustrated on Page 56 of the last *TPN*.

Al Haake, who discovered what was thought to be a continuation of that crack, has heard that the crack may go across five rows of stamps.

Unfortunately, Haake has not seen any of these.

Reports about any cracks on 3T1B are urgently requested by *TPN*.

20T12-14 found: Condition is poor, prices drop

Continued from Front Page

for a strip of five; William S. Langs offered \$140 and \$190 for the same strips.

A collector was the first buyer in Indianapolis. According to William B. Glemon of Indianapolis, a *TPN* reader, the philatelic clerk sold two or four rolls of 3,000 to collectors.

Richard Weinberg and Eric Scott of The Stamp Shop bought 32 of the 48 rolls of 3,000. The stock was sold out in less than two days, Glemon said.

I started hearing about the find April 26 when George V.H. Godin, a co-worker on the catalog, called to warn me that the \$300 price was no longer good. I put warning labels on the May *TPN*.

Then, after the catalog was out of my hands, the first offerings appeared from two of the four dealers who had formed a syndicate to buy out all the 12-14 Pumpers. The partners were Jon Demey of M&M/Southwest in Mesa, Ariz.; Frank Marrelli of Kenosha, Wis.; Dale Hendricks of Dale Enterprises in Emmaus, Pa., and Langs in New York City.

Marrelli said about 11% were "average" or worse and fewer than 15% were XF. M&M's first offer included an "economy grade," priced at \$17 for P/S5; \$15 for P/S3, and \$12.50 for a pair. Denney's F-VF prices were \$28.50, \$25.25 and \$23. The VF-XF prices were \$37, \$32.75 and \$28. M&M sought a 50% premium for Superb. That brings a superb P/S5 to \$55.50.

Dale offered P/S3 at \$25 and P/S5 at \$28.75. His prices asked a 30% premium for XF and 100% for Superb. That brought Superb to \$57.50. Dale usually asks 30% for XF-Superb.

One condition reportedly imposed on members of the syndicate set minimum resale prices. Another was that none of the participants was to wholesale any strips to Dr. Robert Rabinowitz.

The reason for that may be found in Dr. Rabinowitz's recent *Coil Number Exposé*, in which he wrote about Demey, Hendricks and Langs.

Dr. Rabinowitz's copyright comments cannot be reproduced here since he declined to permit quotation (as he is entitled to do). But he can be paraphrased to have said Langs was driving up prices. Dr. Rabinowitz specifically said Langs was not manipulating prices, calling it instead speculating, gambling, and business risk-taking.

Perhaps it rubbed Langs the wrong way. Langs declined to return a call from *TPN*.

But it was all in vain. Dr. Rabinowitz, a careful hunter for good strips, found 23 rolls of 3,000 on his own. He declined to say where.

Dr. Rabinowitz was selling the strips at \$29 for F-VF strips of three and \$30 for strips of five. He charges a 20% premium for VF-XF and 40% for XF-S.

Throughout the finds, quality was worse on Plate 14 than on Plate 12. Then a find was made by Kim Cuniberti, and here quality was better.

Whether the huge finds will provide enough good quality material for collector needs remains to be seen.

O135 — 20 cent Official #1 PS-5

<u>F</u>	<u>VF</u>	<u>XF</u>
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Longer strips available at 30 cents per stamp.

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Ken Lawrence
P.O. Box 3568
Jackson, MS 39207

Work starts on 1989 catalog

As the first copies of the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* were being put in the mail, work began on the 1989 edition.

Members of the Plate Number Coil Study Group who worked on the first proofs of the 1988 edition made several suggestions that could not be put into force because layout had progressed too far to allow such change.

One suggestion is open to discussion: Should the catalog price mint singles?

The idea seems sound in view of the issuance of plate number singles albums by several publishers. But there's a question as to how many collectors actually collect mint singles. Opinion among members of the study group who were polled about this was that most singles collectors are after used singles, not mint singles.

Whether to include them depends on response from you. Your thoughts are solicited pro and con.

A second suggestion arose obliquely.

Ken Lawrence, working on an article for *Linn's*, needed data on some alleged first-day covers bearing precanceled 4¢ Stagecoach or 17¢ Electric Auto.

Until now, the catalog has carried the earliest date to press. If the precancel went to press first, it was noted; but separate to-press dates were not given.

Lawrence had to plow through masses of data from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to see when Plates 1 and 2 of the two stamps in question were sent to press as precancels. When he was done, he found that there were no precancels of 17T1 and 17T2 until the Type C overprints were sent to press in August 1985, obviously too late for any FDC.

On the precanceled Stagecoach FDCs, the press dates were similarly impossible.

Said Lawrence: "So, if someone offers you a 4¢ Stagecoach precanceled FDC or a 17¢ Electric Auto precanceled FDC, watch your wallet! The tagged versions of both these stamps were issued on their

first days, but in both cases the precancels were not made available until several months later."

The 1989 catalog will definitely give to-press dates for all precancels where possible. There is, however, a fly in the ointment when it comes to recent precancels.

The Bureau no longer gives comprehensive data on precancel dates-to-press. Where they are available, the catalog will give them.

Another subject that is open to suggestions from you is whether precancels should be priced as mint singles and mint pairs.

Does anyone collect them that way? If yes, how many do? The study group needs your thoughts.

Please take a moment to drop off a postcard with your views.

Now that the PNC circle has expanded, any suggestions or ideas (or questions about anything that is unclear in the catalog) are more than welcome.

Correction and Offer

The telephone number in the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* is incorrect (it was incorrectly submitted, and not the editor's error). For the record, the correct number is:

(203) 359-9918

As per the above-mentioned ad, my interest in variety material is essentially that of a collector. As a result of these interests, I have prepared a computer print-out of known constant varieties as per the '88 catalog with bimonthly supplements based on my *TPN* column.

Although used as a trade list for my personal collection, it can be (and is) used as a handy checklist for those interested in this area. A current copy is available for \$2 (to cover copying, handling and postage costs).

In addition to the above, I maintain a comprehensive stock of standard PNC strips and number-on-top miscuts. Free lists are available on request.

Special discount to PNC³ members: 5% off across the board.

A. S. Cibulskas

28 Westwood Rd.
Stamford, CT 06902

Plate and mat varieties — Part X

By A.S. Cibulskas

3¢ Conestoga Wagon

a. "Blazing Conestoga"—Numerous short (about 1-2mm) plate cracks rising from the top of the wagon to the upper edge of the stamp. Constant at 12L. (Maves)

4.9¢ Buckboard

a. "Hand brake" plate crack. Horizontal plate crack, about 1.5mm long, extending from about the bottom of the "9" to the right perpendicularly abutting rear wheel. Constant at 5R irrespective of the precancel gap on Plate 1. (Clark)
b. Dropped transfer at 4L. Constant in roll of 500. Plate 1. (Anon.)

5.2¢ Sleigh

a. Red dot about 1mm above "h" in "Sleigh" on Plate 1. Constancy confirmed at 1L on both tagged and precanceled. (Courtney/Rabinowitz)

5:2

b. Red dot above the decimal point of the denomination on Plate 1 results in appearance like a colon between "5" and "2." Found on tagged. Constancy needs to be defined. (Courtney)

6¢ Tricycle

a. Brown ink mark at about 2 o'clock position of left wheel. Constant at 3L on Plate 1 precanceled. (Maves)

8.3¢ Ambulance

a. Elongated smear at the plate number of the B Press precancel from Plate 2. (Cibulskas)

8.5¢ Tow Truck

a. Dot at about 11 o'clock inside upper loop of the "8." on Plate 1 precanceled. Constant at 1L. (Liu)

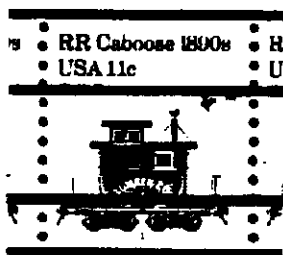
9.3¢ Mail Wagon

a. Dot about 1mm above and slightly to the right of the "1" in "Mail" at 1L of Plate 6. Constant on tagged and precanceled. (Courtney/Rabinowitz)

10.1¢ Oil Wagon

a. Correction of typographical error in previous report regarding ink dot inside zero. The correct position is 17R, not 1R.

11¢ Caboose



a. Mat variety "Hammer over Caboose."

Constant in roll of 500 at 1L (on this stamp there are no precancel gaps, so this is correct, *Ed.*). Flaw results in the appearance of an oversized hammer just below the top precancel line about 2mm right of the smokestack. (Cibulskas) (Illustrated above)

12¢ Stanley Steamer

a. Mat variety on Plate 1 in which top line is half the normal thickness starting at 11R and continuing for three stamps to 14R. Constant. (Report did not say whether Cottrell or B Press). (Gould)

20¢ Fire Pumper

All on the numbered stamp of Plate 16

a. Dot at 7:30 o'clock next to the right wheel. (Rabinowitz)

b. Dot about 1mm above and very slightly to the left of the "m" in "Pumper." Constant. (Courtney)

c. Possible plate crack extends from the right of the base of the first "P" upward about 0.5mm. Constancy needs to be defined. (Courtney)

d. Three distinct plate cracks rising vertically above the plate number, one above the "1," two above the "6." Sufficient examples have been found to show progressions. Some are as short as 0.2-0.3mm; others as long as 1.0mm. (Courtney *et al.*)

20¢ Flag

a. Dot at upper left of the design, about 1mm left of the ball atop the flag pole at 2L of Plate 14 precanceled. Constant. (Maves)

Lighthouse to exclude tagged 18M3 precancel

By Wolfgang Schön

I have a strip of five of 18M3PV, the 18¢ Washington Monument precancel with the plate numbers 33333, with dull gum. I maintain that one cannot honestly call it being block tagged compared with the really block-tagged 18M3 tagged stamp.

Here are my paper measurements on all the 18M stamps:

18M1112	.10mm thick	shiny gum
18M11121P	.10mm thick	shiny gum
18M3333	.12mm thick	shiny gum
18M3333P	.12mm thick	shiny gum
18M3333PV	.11mm thick	dull gum

The last item is definitely a reissue, printed by the same sleeves, 3, 3, 3, 3, and 3, on another (third) type of paper.

As far as I am concerned, I believe Steve Esrati hit the nail on the head in "Unraveling the mystery of the tagged precancels" in *TPN* Number 3, 1988, when he said:

"The apparent explanation of the tagged precancels, then, is that some varnish [Esrati called it lacquer] containing tagging was inadvertently applied to the precancels. To substantiate this theory, one notices that later finds of the dull-gum stamps showed ever-decreasing amounts of tagging. And, finally, there was none."

In all the reports of finds of the tagged precancels, one notices that all refer to the tagging as light or very light.

Summing it all up: At the present stage, my point of view is that the alleged tagging of 18M3PV is not a constant variety and that, therefore, the Lighthouse album should not consider it for inclusion in the PNC album.

Editor's note: Schön is with Lighthouse Albums and is a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group.

If your label says "4-88," your subscription is up.

10.9¢ find detailed; TPN draws a blast

I feel it necessary to respond to your Page 26 article in the March 1988 *The Plate Number*. As I am sure you have learned through the amazing PNC grapevine, it was I who located the 10.9¢ #3s and #4s. The rest of your facts and assertions are erroneous.

1. Bill Langs simultaneously and coincidentally withdrew his buy ad before I informed anyone I had located some. He could not have known of my discovery.

2. I rarely represent quantity. That is my personal business and I feel I should be the only one to "count my money." I would never state that a supply was limited when it was not.

3. I made no multiple shipments to Bill Langs, nor to my knowledge has he ever purchased anything from me.

My wholesale prices on the item are not, and never have been, a secret for those dealers who contact me. Further, I have not raised or lowered them—\$250 for Fine, \$287.50 for VF, \$325 for XF #3 and \$350 for XF #4. Of course my price was higher for the [gap] 4L.

5. Surely you know the expense of writing more than 30,000 letters searching for elusive coils. Add to that the time for processing responses and disposing of the scrap from acquired rolls. What do you expect me to do when I find desirable items? Give them away? If it is considered sleazy to recover costs and make a profit, I had better get out. I do not have sufficient time or money to be donating that extensively to the philatelic community.

6. Investigation of other "surfacing" of 10.9s trace back to me. Most of the dealers I sell to knew it was I upon which the first part of the article focused. Your libelous assertions of sleazy practices were unappreciated.

Diane Thompson
Portsmouth, Va.

In reply: TPN regrets that it drew an incorrect conclusion about a cause-and-effect relationship between the halt in Bill Langs' buy ads and the find by Ms. Thompson, who is the person who has been circularizing all U.S. bulk mailers.

The "sleaze" comment referred to the fact that collectors have a great deal of

Letters to TPN

difficulty keeping up with what goes on and have been taken advantage of. The fear was that this could be a similar case.

As it turned out, the 10.9¢ find by Ms. Thompson did not finally affect prices and the promised warning was not put in the 1988 catalog.

Will the real 'Sitting Duck' please stand up?

For the third time in recent months, I've seen the "Sitting Duck" advertised by dealers. Retail prices have ranged from \$8 to \$75.

Too bad they haven't read the write-ups or seen the illustrations in *TPN*!

What they are advertising are the "predecessors" to the Duck!

It consists of merely a dot (which developed into the head and beak) and a line (which developed into the body and wing).

To the best of my knowledge, there are still only seven Ducks from the original find.

Gerald H. Clark
Midvale, Utah

In reply: A photocopy of a very much enlarged photograph of the Duck sent in by Clark is on the cover of the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog*.

It is extremely dangerous to assume that there are only seven (or any other number) of anything around.

There may not be many full ducks around, but you never know what will turn up.

Paper types still controversy

I just read the latest *TPN*. I realize it's too late, but I wanted to clarify an article on Page 55 in which you announce the change of 9.3T2P-3L and 9.3T4P-3L from Type IIa paper to Type II. I believe I was the first to announce this and it was noted on my March 16, 1988, list.

In early March, I found a single strip of five of 9.3T2P. I'm familiar with Kim Cuniberti's find and realized that this was not from the same rolls. My strip was clearly XF (all of Cuniberti's are low or with a cut number), and clearly

Type II paper.

The agreed procedure was that I send my strip to Cuniberti so that he could compare the design and precancel to his, noting the separate find. Then he sent my strip to Rich Nazar along with a copy of his. Nazar examined it for paper type, then returned it to me. Obviously, I was hoping to receive credit for a new find, but as it turned out, Cuniberti's were changed to Type II.

I am writing to take exception with the classification of Type IIa. Granted, Nazar has done extensive research and has greater knowledge of paper types, but this change on these stamps from Type IIa to II supports the theory that the difference is so slight that there is no difference at all.

Many collectors purchased these strips based on the "tough call" of one person. There was no way to verify or expertize that paper type and obviously, these people did not get what they had bargained for.

Although I agree that paper types remain a unique variety, you decided to list Type IIa paper for the 7.4¢ Baby Buggy and the 11¢ Caboose in the *PNC Catalog* based on subjective opinions.

It is certainly possible that the applicator was new at one time and created crisp ridging. Or that the gum was more viscous and flowed on a little more smoothly. But this, in my mind, does not constitute a unique variety or a separate catalog entry. No one would consider these features as a unique variety caused during the printing process. Why then should they be when it comes to gum application?

I'm not saying that Nazar's Type IIa doesn't exist, but until some independent verification of a different paper is received from the paper manufacturer, or some objective measurement can be made (UV, microscope, ruler, etc.), Type IIa should remain an interesting oddity, but not a unique variety as suggested in the catalog.

Lee Warzala
Springfield, Ill.

In reply: A response by Richard Nazar was too late for this issue. Ken Lawrence

Reader needs printing data on 22¢ Flags

Continued from Page 69

made the following observations:

"By the clearly stated and illustrated definitions Nazar has published in *Linn's*, *TPN* and the catalog, this item is printed on Type IIa paper, as originally reported.

"Just to check, I got our examples of Types II and IIa on the 7.4¢ Baby Buggy ... and placed my 9.3¢ Plate 4 Gap 3L strip between them. It is a perfect match with the Type IIa strip, and strikingly different from Type II."

'Waving W'

Regarding the letter in *TPN* (May 1988) about the "Waving W" vs. the "Perched Parrot," based on the descriptions of the "Perched Parrot" provided to me, I would think it the same as this "Waving W." Since no specific examples were submitted to me for comparison, I cannot unequivocally define them.

A.S. Cibulskas
Stamford, Conn.

Kudos to PSD

After despairing of ever getting anything but folded coils in a flat envelope from the Philatelic Sales Division, I was very pleasantly surprised when my last order arrived coiled up in Styrofoam.

Kudos to the wonderful person who processed my order.

I hope my next order finds the same understanding person. I think most of us would gladly pay any extra fee necessary if one could get unfolded coils each time.

Robert L. Schwab
Greendale, Wis.

Tagged precancels

Regarding your story on tagging, there is also a Bureau precancel of the tagged 50¢ Americana (Scott 1608).

Ken Lawrence
Jackson, Miss.

'Quotation marks'

I read with interest Dr. Howard Winner's report (*TPN*, May 1988) of his example of the "Quotation marks" variety on Plate 2 of the 4¢ Stagecoach with chill-roller doubling.

I've had in my collection for more than a year an identical example, along with

Letters to TPN

the companion Plate 1 chill-roller doubling.

I also have in my collection an example of the "Quotation Marks" with no chill-roller doubling visible.

When I've examined them before, I've always felt that the "Quotation marks" was a true plate variety. The example with the chill roller seems to me to be a bonus—a roll of chill-roller doublings that just also happened to be from the row of the sleeve that contained the "Quotation marks."

I believe the "Quotation marks" and chill-roller doubling to be two separate creatures.

Thomas Beschoner
Washington, D.C.

TPN is the source

I would like to show my support by renewing my subscription early.

TPN is the only detailed source of information that I receive. *Linn's* serves as a source of weekly information, with Mr. Lawrence's column appearing monthly. These articles are fine, but I turn to *TPN* for specifics. Thank you for your efforts.

Edward Gould
Roscommon, Mich.

Questions on printing 22F

I am working on an exhibit of 22¢ Flag coils. I need information regarding production to confirm what I think I know and to answer unanswered questions.

TPN and the *PNC Catalog* have been extremely useful. I have read and studied *TPN* as well as all related articles in *Linn's* and *The American Philatelist*. I have ordered *The U.S. Specialist* and have written the American Philatelic Research Library. I have yet to find the detailed information I think I need. A club member recommended Joel's *Twentieth Century*, but I have yet to locate the book.

My questions are:

- Are the 22¢ Flags perforated and tagged on the B and C presses themselves?
- Is the guillotine-type perforator used?
- Are the coils cut as well as rolled on the Huck and Goebel coilers?

I thoroughly enjoyed reading George

Godin's "How big is a coil on the 22¢ Flag?" in *TPN* (Vol. II, Page 68), but I seem to have missed the point.

Godin said that not only was 22F2 printed on the 52-stamp wide B Press (normally processed on the Huck coiler to make rolls of 500 and 3,000, which require a width of 18 rows), but also was found in 52-stamp wide bubble packs of 100, normally processed on the Goebel coiler requiring 20 rows. How was this done? It explains how 20-row printed webs from the C Press can be processed on the 18-row Huck coiler but not the other way around. Does the 20-row Goebel coiler also accept subjects 18 rows wide?

While studying my strips of 22F under UV light, I noticed two distinctly different widths of block tagging. I also noticed that the wider-tagged blocks were whiter than the narrow-tagged and shone bright green. Knowing that the stamps were printed on both the B and C (D) types of three-color intaglio presses, I divided the stamps into two groups and then matched the plate numbers in each group with their corresponding press.

Happily, I noted that the wider design areas were printed on the B Press. However, there is some question on Plates 18 and 20, which are known to have been printed on the C Press. Unfortunately, I have returned by borrowed UV light, so I cannot say more without re-study. Evidently different tagging mats are used on each press, but that does not necessarily explain the color difference under UV light. Would the differences be caused by a different paper used on the two presses or is the difference more a matter of tagging compounds used? Could this be a new way to differentiate Plate B from Plate C?

I welcome any additional information.

Debbie Pezzillo
1129 Aurora Circle,
Birmingham, Ala. 35215

Is there a 25T1, C/D Press?

Has anyone checked to see whether any of the Plate 1 coils of the 25¢ Bread Wagon exist with 48-stamp (C/D Press) intervals?

Ken Lawrence
Jackson, Miss.

10.1s make history as PNC imperforates

Dr. John Greenwood, who keeps his eye on imperforates for the PNC Study Group, reports that the first imperfs have been found with two different gaps on the same stamp.

The stamp is Plate 1 of the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon, precanceled, and Dr. Greenwood now confirms it exists imperforate on Gap 13 L and on 3R.

Meanwhile, Dr. Greenwood and Tim Lindemuth have accomplished something in their own collections. They have completed the 20¢ Flag as imperforates on all plates, 1 through 14, tagged only. The precancel has not yet been found imperforate. Lindemuth now also has all 20F FDCs, Plates 1 through 3, and his exhibit won a gold at ROMPEX in Denver. It'll be at STAmPsHOW in Detroit, where PNC3 is meeting. Lindemuth will present a seminar on EFOs of 20F at the show.

When USPS put 20¢ stamps back on sale for the April rate hike, it searched its vaults for any old coils still on hand.

20¢ Flags confirmed as having been put back on sale include Plates 9, 12, 13 and 14.

Reports of 20¢ Fire Pumpers put back on sale include 3-4, 5-13, 9-10, 12-14, and 15-16. Other reports are requested.

And, please note this: The 25¢ Flag Over Yosemite stamp does not come in rolls of 100, but only in rolls of 500 and 3,000. That makes it a stamp issue for large mailers, not for individuals.

The idea may have been that the 25¢ Honeybee coil would fill that role, but it has been postponed indefinitely. In the meantime, production began on the 25¢ Bread Wagon on Plates 2, 3 and 4 of the C Press, in rolls of 100. Rolls of 500 from Plate 5 were on sale at L'Enfant Plaza.

E.H. Cutler, who publishes *The Stamp Collector's Registry*, has done what needed to be done to settle once and for all just how to spell the make of the 20¢ Fire Pumper.

USPS, in its original release for the stamp, called it an Amoskeg pumper. Scott repeated that spelling. But the pumper shown on the stamp still exists,

All the news that fits

and Cutler did his homework.

This is what he reports in the 1988 edition of his book:

"Amoskeg Engine, Old Town Alexandria, Va.

"This fire pumper was purchased 'second hand' from a Philadelphia volunteer fire company in 1871. It was assigned to the Alexandria volunteer company later known as Columbia Engine Company No. 4.

"It was still in service as late as 1927. Now a tourist attraction, located at Station 51, 317 Prince St.

"The USPS information spells it 'Amoskeg.'"

Cutler's book is full of information that should be available to all collectors. Here, is his description of the B Press version of the 12¢ Stanley Steamer precancel:

"The re-issue (not re-engraved) stamp was first reported to have gone on sale Sept. 3, 1987. But later information indicated an earlier use. BEP plate reports show the stamps went to press on B Press May 12, 1987 (178145-1). Therefore, some could have been used before Sept. 3. This issue was a surprise."

Cutler, however, was given some bad information at USPS which told him the maroon color of the 5.5¢ Star Route Truck came off one sleeve and the black off another. That simply is not so.

George V.H. Godin explained it this way: "There's no way they were going to use a three-color press to print one color and then rewind the paper to run it through for a second printing."

In other words, the precancel's two colors came off one sleeve; the tagged stamp's one color off another.

Michael Laurence, publisher and editor of *Linn's*, said he was surprised by a survey of *Linn's* readers that discovered that one-third say they collect PNCs.

"I was, frankly, a bit dubious of this figure," he said, "but a parallel survey done by a pollster on behalf of a major advertiser came up with the same result.

That's a higher number than those who collect British Commonwealth.

"It may be, of course, that some of the respondents mean only that they have been so highly sensitized to the coils that whenever they see a number on a cover they put it in a shoe box, but it's still an impressive figure."

Ken Lawrence won a silver in Midaphil's literature competition for his PNC column in *Linn's*.

A.S. Cibulskas had a comprehensive article about PNC varieties in the May issue of *The U.S. Specialist*. The June issue was the last to be edited by Belmont Faries, chairman of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee and the Washington correspondent for *Stamp Collector*.

Faries said, "I'm close to 75 and my wife thinks I'm doing too much."

Replacing Faries as editor is Charles H. Yeager, a PNC collector and Washington correspondent for *Linn's*.

Also in the news is the first issue of *Coil Line*, the newsletter of PNC³, edited by Tom Maeder, the introductory May issue sought articles from members.

Frank Marrelli, a dealer in Kenosha, Wis., found a super-duper plate variety on the precanceled 7.1¢ Tractor.

He called it the "blowout," even though the tractor has no rubber tires.

It occurs at the top left quarter of the front left wheel and looks like the engraver intended to put a fender over the wheel. A large, triangular area is white.

Here's a rough sketch:



Marrelli did not report the variety's position in the roll.

Thom E. Wheeler recently ordered a six-pound mission mixture from Mixture Mart of Drake, Colo. Here's his report:

"For fifteen bucks I received a... carton stuffed with stamps.

"I found dozens of common coil plate number singles and two little gems! One was an 18¢ Flag with a '6.' The other was a 20¢ Flag stamp (without plate number) but still a nice example of the brick red variety!"

Doubling found next to 'Footprints'

PNC³ to meet in Detroit

Tim Lindemuth, whose specialty is the 20¢ Flag, has found a chill-roller doubling on the stamp to the right of the "Flying Footprints" variety on 20F2.

The accompanying illustration by Lindemuth shows where to look for the doublings.

The markings in the left margin of the stamp are not always as clear as they appear in the illustration. The ones around the lettering, however, are quite easily seen.

Lindemuth will present a seminar at STaMpsHOW 88, the APS convention which begins Aug. 25 in Cobo Hall, Detroit, and runs through Aug. 27.

The Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC³) will meet at the show on Aug. 27 and will also present a seminar on PNCs.

PNC³ has appointed Tom Maeder as editor of its newsletter. Maeder is a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group and a part-time dealer in PNCs.



The highlight of the PNC³ meeting will be installation of new officers.

PNC collectors previously met at Arneripex and the 1987 STaMpsHow in Boston. In addition to swapping and dealing, they flocked to the bourse tables manned by PNC dealers.

PNC³ has a membership close to 300, and is still growing, according to President Gene Trinks.

New varieties New PNC strips

Walter Esparza has discovered a "Comet over Capitol Dome" variety at 6L on 22F2. I have it in stock at \$5 for PS/8 VF; \$6 XF, and \$7 Superb.

I have a few "Flying Footprints" with clear offsets on the stamp to its right. A strip of 5 VF is \$30.

I can supply 1T2B at 85 cents VF; all numbers of the 25T at \$5 VF; all numbers on the Flag over Yosemite (\$5 VF) and will have the 16.7¢ Popcorn Wagon, 15¢ Tugboat (tagged and precanceled) and the 13.2¢ Coal Car as soon as they are issued.

I can usually supply strips of six at 10% more; strips of three at 10% off.

I stock Lighthouse PNC albums. See my ad on Page 59, please.

Discount: 5% over \$25; 10% over \$100. 5% more off to members of PNC³. (In Ohio add 7% sales tax.)

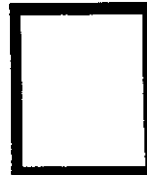
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