

# New rates may bring up to 23 new coils

## The rates

The most notable change in the new postal rates is that a whole new category of ZIP+4 mail has been added, a category that requires large mailers not only to use the nine-digit ZIP code but also to sort that mail to nine digits and to place the bar code on each mailpiece. The Postal Service calls this "prebarcoding."

Other major changes are the dropping of the carrier-route sorting rate on ZIP+4 mail; establishment of two separate rates for express mail; and a larger savings for ZIP+4 mailers who add the bar coding.

In addition, the Postal Service had these surprises in store:

- It will no longer bother printing tagged stamps of fractional-rate stamps not needed for general postal purposes.

- It will sell the high-denomination express mail stamps as miniature sheets.

- It will issue at least 13 new coil stamps this year, and change the precancel on the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon.

The old ZIP+4 rate that used to be 21.1 cents climbs to 24.1 cents, a paltry savings off the first-class rate of nine-tenths of a cent. But that rate merely requires that a mailer use the nine-digit code. It does not require sorting.

The joke, of course, is that this rate has so many other requirements that few large mailers would want to use it. To start with, it requires a minimum of 250 mailpieces. The area for the bar code must be left clear. The nine-digit ZIP must be in a specific place for recognition by an op-

tical character reader (OCR).

Even the colors are required to have a "print reflectance difference of at least 40 percent measured at a wavelength of 650 nanometers."

To put it bluntly, any mailer who can do all this can also sort his mail and obtain a better rate. But some mailers are stuck. They have large mailings spread nationwide and cannot use the cheaper ZIP+4 rates for sorting into bundles of 10 or more pieces for 3- or 5-digit ZIP areas.

That means the basic ZIP+4 rate will only be used by those mailers.

Under the old rate, the 17.5¢ Racer was intended for mailers who sorted ZIP+4 mail to five digits or to carrier route. (No added discount was available for the carrier-route sort.) That rate now climbs to 20.5 cents.

But a mailer can save another half a cent by adding the bar code. Since the minimum mailing for sorted ZIP+4 mail is 500 pieces, this represents an added saving of only \$2.50 per 500 mailpieces, not much encouragement.

To obtain the special bar-code discount, a mailer must use envelopes showing the Facing Identification Mark (FIM), the four black vertical lines near where a stamp would go.

A mailer who uses ZIP+4 could get his mailing list prepared for ZIP+4 at no charge before the new rates. It now costs \$42 per 1,000 addresses.

Another new feature is that bulk mailers may now avail

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Paid circulation this issue is 318

## Unraveling the mystery of the tagged precancels

By Stephen G. Esrati

I had expected to be able to give a full report here on the tagged precancels found on the 18¢ Washington Monument stamps from Plate 33333 (18M3P).

Unfortunately, requests for information to the Postal Service necessitated checking with the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. That delays things.

This then is based on observations and theorizing, not on an official explanation.

When the stamps were first singled out, it was because they had dull gum instead of the shiny gum found on other Monument stamps.

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## 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).

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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).

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# New rates may bring up to 23 new coils

Continued from first page

themselves of the savings of ZIP+4 rates. Previously, ZIP+4 was available only to first-class mailers.

Finally, first-class mail is now limited to 11 ounces. First-class mail weighing more must go as Priority Mail.

There are a few other wrinkles. If your letter exceeds the size limits, there is a 10-cent surcharge on first-class mail. For bulk mailers, the surcharge is 5 cents on sorted first-class mail.

## The stamps

The new postal rates would appear to require the issuance of at least 23 new coil stamps.

Only one old stamp will be retained with a new precancel, according to the Postal Service. Plans call for reissue of the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon, which will be precanceled for carrier-route sort. It is now inscribed "Bulk Rate."

That leaves 22 needed stamps; 13 have been announced (see box).

Some stamps are obviously needed. There is currently no 15¢ stamp in the Great Americans or any other series. It is needed for the basic post card rate. The Tugboat stamp will meet that rate.

Since the withdrawal of the 20¢ Fire Pumper, only the 20¢ Harry S. Truman stamp of the Great Americans Series remains in current stock for second-ounce, first class mail. A 20¢ Cable Car is tentatively scheduled for October.

There is no current 45¢ stamp for a two-ounce first-class letter. This stamp would also be needed for the basic international airmail letter. No coil stamp is scheduled this year for this rate.

You can expect a 16.7¢ Popcorn Wagon stamp in July for the basic third-class rate. It will be the first of the new precancel-only Transportation Series stamps.

An 8.4¢ coil stamp will also be needed for the basic nonprofit rate. It is scheduled for August.

As makeup postage, the Postal Service has shipped 3¢ Parkman coil stamps to some post offices. These had

been withdrawn. It is also shipping 20¢ Official stamps and 20¢ Fire Pumper and Flag coils. A USPS spokesman said it was economical to use up remaining stocks. The same goes for 15¢ Oliver Wendell Holmes stamps and 3¢ stamps of the Americana Series.

Bulk mailers may use up supplies of 5.5-, 7.1-, 8.3-, 8.5-, 10.1-, 12.5-, 17.5-, 18- and 21.1-cent stamps until Oct. 9, 1988, by paying additional postage at time of mailing. This means almost all stamped bulk mail will have false frankings until then.

But the rules are strict on which stamps may be used for what purpose.

For nonprofit mailers, the 5.5-cent Star Route Truck may be used for the 5.3-cent rate; the 7.1-cent Tractor may be used for the 7.6-cent rate, and the 8.5-cent Tow Truck may be used for the 8.4-cent rate. The 7.1¢ may, of course, be used for the 7.1¢ ZIP+4 rate.

For regular bulk mailers, the 8.3-cent Ambulance may be used for mail under the 10.1-cent rate; the 10.1-cent Oil Wagon may be used on mail going at 13.2 cents, and the 12.5-cent Pushcart may be used instead of a 16.7-cent stamp. Mailers may continue to use the 10.1¢ and 12.5¢ stamps for those rates.

On first-class mail, the 18-cent Monument may be used on mail qualifying for the 21-cent rate; the 17.5-cent Racing Car may be used on ZIP+4 mail under the 20.5-cent rate, and the 21.1-cent Letter may be used in lieu of a 24.1-cent stamp.

According to *The Postal Bulletin*, \$5, \$8.75 and \$12 stamps will be issued in panes of 20.


It also promises coils of 100 for 17¢, 20¢, 22¢ and 25¢; coils of 500 for 1¢, 2¢, 3¢, 4¢, 5¢, 6¢, 9¢, 10¢, 11¢, 12¢, 14¢, 15¢, 17¢, 18¢, 20¢, 21¢, 22¢, 25¢ and \$1, and rolls of 3,000 of all values printed as rolls of 500.

For a rundown on tentative plans for new stamps, please check the box on the opposite page.

All dates are tentative, and have even changed since some of them appeared in the philatelic press.

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# New rates for which stamps are slated

## First class<sup>1</sup>

### Less than 11 ounces<sup>2</sup>

1st ounce	.25	☆
Added ounce	.20	☆
Cards	.15	☆

### ZIP+4 unsorted

1st ounce	.241	☆ P
Added ounce	.20	☆
Cards	.141	

### 5-digit sorted (2 ounces or less)

1st ounce	.21	☆ P
2nd ounce	.20	☆
Cards	.13	☆ P

### 5-digit sorted (2 ounces or more)

1st ounce	.17	@
Each additional ounce	.20	☆

### ZIP+4 sorted

1st ounce	.205	☆ P
Each additional ounce	.20	☆
Cards	.125	?

### Bar-coded ZIP+4

1st ounce	.20	☆
Each additional ounce	.20	☆
Cards	.12	?

### Carrier-route sorted (less than 2 ounces)

1st ounce	.195	
2d ounce	.20	☆
Cards	.115	

### Carrier-route sorted (more than 2 ounces)

1st ounce	.155	
Each additional ounce	.20	☆ P

## Third class<sup>3</sup>

Basic	.167	☆ P
Basic ZIP+4	.162	
5-digit sort	.132	☆ P
5-digit ZIP+4	.127	
ZIP+4 bar-coded	.122	
Carrier-route sort	.101	?

## Nonprofit<sup>4</sup>

Basic	.084	☆ P
Basic ZIP+4	.079	
5-digit sort	.076	☆ P
5-digit ZIP+4	.071	&
ZIP+4 bar-coded	.066	
Carrier-route sort	.053	☆ P

## Notes to rate table

1. Nonstandard surcharge: 10¢ at single-piece rate, 5¢ on sorted mail.
  2. Heavier pieces must be sent as Priority Mail. Priority Mail rates vary by distance traveled when exceeding 2 pounds.
  3. Weight limit is 3.3667 ounces. Pound rate applies for heavier pieces.
  4. Weight limit is 3.3920 ounces. Pound rate applies for heavier pieces.
- P Precanceled version only coming for this rate.  
 ☆ Stamp announced for 1988 issuance.  
 @ Stamp with precancel exists only in Cottrell version.  
 & Stamp exists with proper B Press service-inscription.  
 ? Current stamp needs new precancel.

## Tentative schedule of 1988 coil stamp issues

(Stamps are listed in descending order by denomination. Each rate marked with a hollow star is represented here by a stamp. An "@" means the stamp is currently available, with the proper precancel text. Only the 10.1¢ Oil Wagon is to get a new precancel text. The 7.1¢ Tractor survives.)

25¢	Flag Over Yosemite — May 20, Yosemite, CA
25¢	Honeybee — July, Corpus Christi, TX.
24.1¢	Tandem Bike — Oct. 26, Radmond, WA. P
21¢	Railroad Mail Car — Aug. 16, Santa Fe, NM. P
20.5¢	Fire Engine — Sept. 28, San Angelo, TX. P
20¢	Cable Car — Aug. 30, San Francisco, CA.
16.7	Popcorn Wagon — July 7. P
15¢	Tugboat — no date given.
13.2¢	Railroad Coal Car — July 19, Pittsburgh, PA. P
13¢	Police Patrol Wagon — Oct. 29, Anaheim, CA. P
10.1	Oil Wagon, new precancel — no date given, Washington, D.C. P
8.4¢	Wheelchair — Aug. 12, Tucson, AZ. P
7.5¢	Carreta — Aug. 30, San Jose, CA. P
5.3¢	Elevator — Sept. 16, New York, NY. P

Note: Some of these dates are revised from those previously reported in the philatelic press.

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# Yellow digits cause confusion on E stamps; only four plate numbers are confirmed

Early reports on the 25¢ E stamp show a clear progression of plate replacement.

The order of the colors of the plate numbers (reading from the left) is red, blue, yellow and black.

The numbers reported so far are 1111; 1211 (blue plate replaced); 1222 (yellow and black plates replaced), and 2222 (black plate replaced).

There have been many unconfirmed reports of a Plate 1212. On closer examination, all turned out to be 1222. This is probably attributable to the fact that the yellow number is hard to see clearly. Magnification helps.

And a reminder: If you have trouble seeing the yellow digit, do what Thom Wheeler of the PNC Study Group suggested for examining the Letters stamp: You view the plate numbers through a blue filter. It brings the hard-to-see yellow number clearly into view.

The blue part of an old pair of 3-D glasses works just fine.

Rolls of 100 have been reported from 1111 and 1211.

Dealer Dale Hendricks of Dale Enterprises did not wait for the stamps to be issued when he ordered his ad in *Linn's* issue of April 11. His ad said: "We can supply 6 different plate numbers. Plate #s 1111, 1211, 1212, 1222, 2122, & 2222." The ad did have an escape clause: "Our choice of numbers."

When the stamps came out, Hendricks only had the same four plate numbers everyone else did.

But there may be a 1212 out there. It is not too likely that the Bureau of Engraving and Printing scrapped both the yellow and black plates simultaneously, even though it is entirely possible.

This brings up the tantalizing scenario that the yellow plate may have been replaced earlier, creating the

1212 plate number. More fascinating would be the possibility that this plate had a short run on the press.

But the big bugaboo in all this is the difficulty in reading the yellow digit in the plate number. All reports of a Plate 1212 are solicited, but submission of an example is an absolute must along with any such report.

## E stamps are valid on mail to Canada

The *Bulletin* of Canada Post Corp. for April 4 instructed employees to allow mail from the United States bearing E stamps.

*Linn's* was told that C and D stamps were also honored by Canada.

The action by Canada Post is a courtesy. Under rules of the Universal Postal Union it did not have to honor the stamps, which, in any case, are inscribed "Domestic."

If your label says "3-88," it's time to renew.

# Lighthouse



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As the sceme 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;
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There are two sets of pages for the whole range of PNC strips, 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	
<b>PNC PS 3/PS 5/PS 7 (Regulars &amp; Precancels)</b>						
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
<b>PNC Singles (Regulars &amp; Precancels)</b>						
Part 1: COTTRELL press/joint line/reg. overall tagged	1981/85	13	53 CS/1	US\$ 18.50	53 CS/1 SF	US\$ 36.50
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		
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## TPN Average rises, two stamps decline

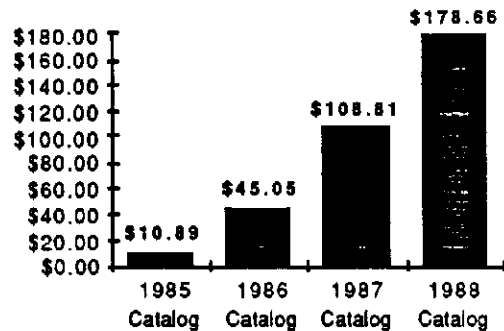
The average of 29 prices reported in the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* shows a huge advance over the previous edition. But prices of a few strips dropped.

The 20¢ Flag, Plate 11 fell from \$35 to \$18. Plate 17 of the 18¢ Surrey fell from \$15 to \$11.

These declines were far outpaced by huge increases in some of the rarest strips. The biggest percentage increase was shown in Plate 1 of the 18¢ Surrey, up to \$60 from \$15.

The 20¢ and "D" Officials had been rising all year, but took a nose dive after they were sold in large quantities to four or more dealers, each of whom thought he was buying them all. The 20s were then put back on sale by the Postal Service and prices are still dropping.

### TPN Average



Several of the stamps in the sample did better than 100% increases, and many doubled.

Prices in the sample are for strips of five. The sample includes several precancels. (A complete list of the sample appeared in the January issue of *The Plate Number*.)

## Mystery of tagged precancels is unraveled

*Continued from front page*

That led to an examination by Kim Cuniberti, a collector-dealer who is interested in paper types. He found it to be Type I (diagonally ridged gum on paper containing brighteners).

Wolfgang Schön of Germany, a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group, examines paper types in yet another way. He measures paper thickness. All Monument stamps were supposed to be printed on a thinner gravure paper that measures 0.10mm in thickness.

But only stamps bearing plate numbers 1112 and 11121 appeared on that paper. Plates 3333 and 33333 were on paper measuring 0.12mm.

The dull-gum stamps have thinner paper than previous 33333s. Schön, unfortunately, did not report the exact measurement.

Next came the study group's Wayne Youngblood, who works at *Linn's*. Youngblood has taken on responsibility for reporting on U.S. stamp tagging. He put the dull-gum Monuments under his UV light and found them to be brightly tagged.

Early copies of the dull-gum stamp exhibited their tagging in an odd way because the stamps are block tagged, meaning that the tagging is supposed to be applied only to the design, not

to the edges. This is done to protect BEP's perforator pins and knife blades.

If there was imperfect alignment of the design and the tagging, the tagging was easy to see as a bright greenish glow at one edge of the design. With perfect alignment, however, the tagging was less obvious unless one placed a known untagged and a dull-gum stamp under the light at the same time.

In that case, the tagged stamp cast some glow from the design itself.

Schön also noticed something else. All over the face of the dull-gum stamp there was white speckling. Under mild magnification, white dots appeared irregularly all over the face of the stamp.

This was the first clue to an explanation of what may have happened.

As we will recall, the gravure paper for the Monument stamps came from two sources: Henry & Leigh Slater Paper Co. in England and Rolland Co. of Canada.

On Rolland paper, the design had a tendency to flake off if the stamps were soaked in water containing chlorine. Transparent sticky tape (such as Scotch brand tape) would also remove the design from a stamp printed on Rolland paper.

Neither problem occurred with Slater paper. When the flaking was brought to the attention of BEP, it reported that a lacquer was applied to all Monument stamps over the design to prevent removal of cancellations.

And this leads to the explanation of the tagged precancels.

The lacquer for the unprecanceled stamps was also used as the medium for adding the tagging. This would have put the lacquer (and the tagging) only over the design.

The apparent explanation of the tagged precancels, then, is that some 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.

The first find of a totally untagged stamp on dull-gum paper was made by Richard J. Nazar, who found it on a commercial cover. This was all very appropriate since the study group's Nazar is the person who first distinguished among the papers used to print plate number coils and gave them their designations.

If an official explanation is given, you will see it reported fully in a future issue of *The Plate Number*.

## Readers have say on PNC numbering system

May I make two suggestions to make the catalog numbers easier for a newcomer to use:

1. Clarify "Cottrell" and "B Press" with additional information, i.e., original design and re-engraved/redrawn.

2. If possible, separate issues with the same face value and different designs, i.e., 5¢ Motorcycle before the 5¢ Milk Wagon.

Edward F. Ryan  
Albany, NY

*That's the way it is in the 1988 catalog. Suggestions for improvements in 1989 are welcome.*

The numbering system looks good. Two problems (and solutions).

1. Series: You are putting the Flags, Letters, "D" stamps, etc. into different series. I think they probably fall under "everything else" or "Misc."

2. Since you don't identify the subject of the stamp you run into problems with the case of identical denominations in the same series. You've been able to slip by so far by creating a lot of series for the "Misc." (see point 1) and using the fact that duplicate denominations in the Transportation Series, so far, have been printed on different presses.

This is not true in the current (Great Americans) definitive series where several 20¢ stamps exist, and there is no reason to assume it will be true for the Transportations.

You really run into problems with the Caboose, Milk Wagon and Dog Sled already, as you have to assume people know which stamp is which or rather which was printed on which press. This is assuming quite a bit of prior knowledge.

It's the same problem with the "many series" plan. If each stamp is its own series, then we all have to know what they are before we can identify them.

I suggest dropping the series in favor of a subject designation. It could be as long as "4.9 Buckboard" or as short as "4.9Bu." Keep the extra let-

ter if you need it for 2LoB, for instance.

3. The varieties need to be designated so they can be separate items in the computer. Same suggestion: 4.9Bu4V1 could be the "buggy whip." The PNC catalog would be an ideal clearing house for official names. You might number them "4.9Bu4V1" for the whip, or "4.9Bu4V1W." "4.9Bu1LE8R" could be the low entry.

I like getting a new numbering system, and I like basing it on the actual stamps rather than forcing them to fit into some external system as Scott must with any sort of serial system. I do think the system must accommodate the problems beginning to emerge like duplicate denominations—and 20Co, 20Fl is really not much more difficult than your present system.

Ed Denson  
Alderpoint, CA

*The longer the number, the harder it is to use. Anyway, in the catalog, each stamp carries a full description that identifies the stamp by series, denomination, design, Scott number, press and anything else that may be pertinent.*

I think the great challenge is to get the whole PNC fraternity to accept the new catalog numbering system.

Tom Maeder  
San Pedro, CA

I discussed the new numbering system with several collectors (both advanced and novice) after Stamp Club last week. They all felt it further confused an already confusing subject and they thought Scott numbers sufficient.

I personally found the 17¢ Autos very confusing using the new numbers. Maybe it gets easier as we use them more.

Gerald Clark  
Midvale, Utah

*Clark and Maeder have seen proofs of the 1988 catalog for them to work over, along with other members of*

*the PNC Study Group. Clark's stamp club should rest reassured. The Scott numbers are still there. Anyway, no one has to use the new numbers who does not wish to do so.*

I feel the numbering system may have problems if the Postal Service continues with design changes while the denomination remains the same (as in 11¢ Caboose and Stutz Bearcat or 17¢ Auto and Dog Sled).

F. M. Arndt  
Bellingham, Wash.

I like your numbering system.  
Edward Gould  
Roscommon, Mich.

Since I happen to be quite involved in computer programming, your new method has the drawback in that you must know something beforehand to use the key.

I would rather classify PNCs in three major categories (so far): Cottrell, B/C/D issues, and gravure printings within the main category; then I look for the face value.

Eugene Y. Liu  
Downey, Calif.

*One would think that the face value of the stamp doesn't require any prior knowledge, but the press that produced the stamp is not seen on the stamp.*

The system may not be broad enough to include paper varieties, plate varieties, etc. Please rethink it.

The *Connoisseur Catalogue* of British Machins has a system that works—sort of. I've seen several schemes for Machins, but all break down.

I agree though that Scott does not work.

Frank Norulak  
Torrance, CA

*For a paper variety, add a "PV" after a hyphen. For a plate variety, add a "V" after another hyphen.*

*The full number (of a made-up example) would read like this:  
4.9T4P-2L-PVii-Vwhip.*

# So you can't use 'D' Stamps on foreign mail

Use of undenominated stamps in international mail is forbidden under the Universal Postal Union agreements to which postal administrations are bound.

The reason is simple. The receiving nation must be able to determine the amount of postage paid on each item to ensure that sufficient postage was applied.

This ban really has nothing to do with the reimbursements one postal administration makes to another for the forwarding of mail.

Dr. Ken Schoolmeester of North Carolina was aware that letters bearing the 22¢ "D" undenominated Eagle should not be used in foreign mails. So he collects them.

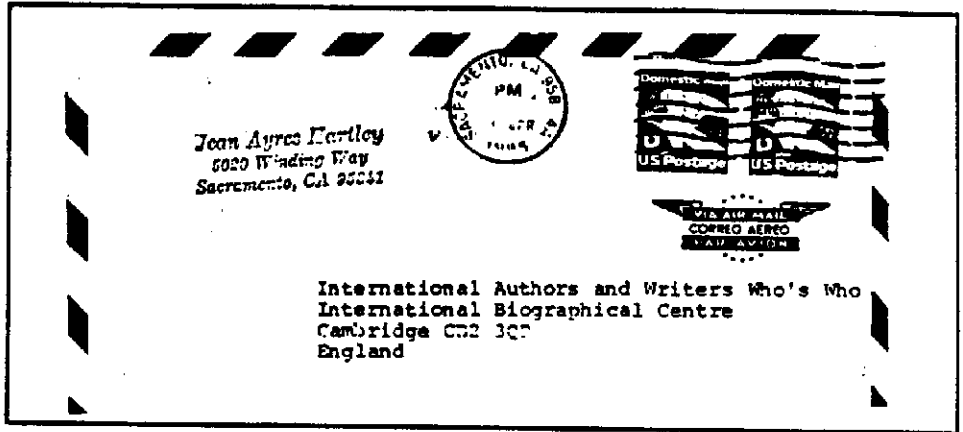
Among his examples of letters that were delivered without penalty or challenge is this airmail letter to England, correctly franked for the 44¢ airmail rate for the first half ounce. It bears a PNC pair from Plate 2.

A second letter to England shows 33 pence to pay. But this is because the letter was underfranked, not because it bore the "D" stamp.

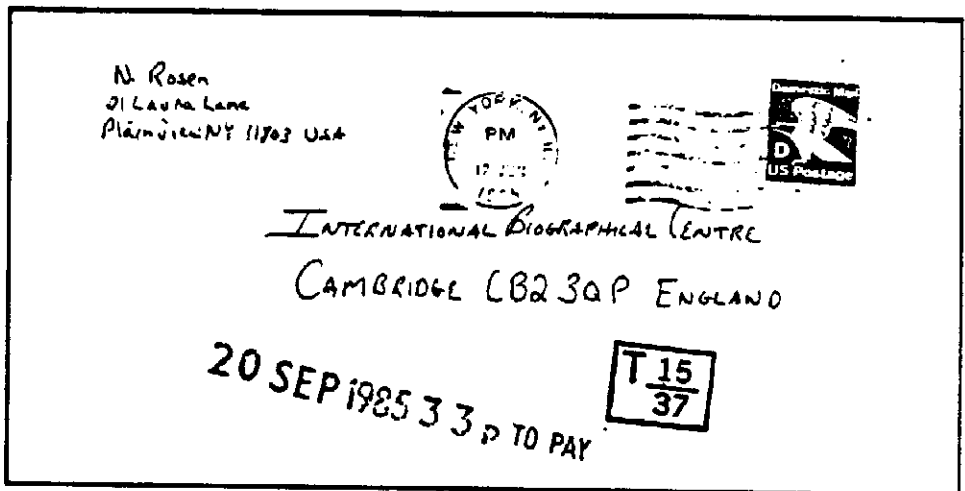
The hole in this collection, of course, is a letter that was returned by a for-

foreign postal service because it bore "D" stamps.

Collectors should be on the lookout for covers sent to foreign addresses bearing "E" stamps.



**Airmail to England, correctly franked for 44¢ airmail rate, with PNC pair from Plate 2.**



**Postage was due, but not because of the 'D' stamps. It was just a case of insufficient postage.**

## 1988 Plate Number Coll Catalog

Completely updated fourth edition prices every PNC strip as used single, mint pair, and strip of three and five. Also, all pre-cancel gaps, constant plate varieties, imperforates. Gives all BEP data on printing. Shows paper types.

Compiled by the leading authorities in the field.

Price \$15 (\$16.05 in Ohio), postpaid. SAVE \$2 (to \$13.91 in Ohio) by ordering before May 31. Publication is expected around May 20.

Wholesale inquiries welcome.

**Stephen G. Esratl**

P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120

## Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC3)

The Plate Number Coil Collectors Club is off and running. According to acting President Gene Trinks, more than 160 collectors have asked for membership applications.

The first newsletter was published in April. The main item was a call for nominations for officers to be elected by mail in June, for terms starting in August.

Previously, acting Secretary Eric Russow reported membership and membership numbers as follows (a star means the person is a member of the Plate Number Coils Study Group):

1. Gene Trinks, Troy, MI (acting president)
2. Eric Russow, Whitefish Bay, WI (acting secretary)
3. Don Eastman, Berlin, NH (acting vice president)
4. Rob Washburn, Skowhegan, ME (acting treasurer)
5. Thomas Gift, Bronx, NY
6. Gary Davis, Des Moines, IA
7. \*George Kuhn, Leesburg, VA
8. Richard Schulman, Smithtown, NY
9. \*A.S. Cibulskas, Stamford, CT
10. Steven Rod, Boystown, NE
11. John Hotchner, Falls Church, VA
12. \*Stephen G. Esrati, Shaker Heights, OH
13. Dr. Joseph Agris, Houston, TX
100. Thomas Leeder, Carthage, NY
101. \*Al Haake, Germantown, IL

The following have requested membership applications:

Michael Albert, Escanaba, MI  
Bruce Alves, Twain Harte, CA  
Larry Anderson, Longview, TX  
F.M. Arndt, Bellingham, WA  
Dick Bales, Geneva, IL  
Dr. Paul Bongiovanni, Fall River, MA  
H.I. Bridges, Jr., Sandersville, GA  
Jeff Channell, Vacaville, CA  
Dennis Cipollo, Columbus, OH  
Philip Cole, Traverse City, MI  
John Conkle, Seattle, WA  
Ed Denson, Alderpoint CA  
Marguerite Doney, Allendale, NJ  
Bob Dumaine, Houston, TX  
W.W. Friend, Jr., Portsmouth, VA  
John Galvagni, Myrtle Beach, SC  
John Goudie, Birmingham, MI  
James Griffin, Naples, TX  
James Hartford, Jr., Athens, GA  
Wayne Hoffman, Dallas, TX  
Pat Insley, Baltimore, MD  
Pam Johnson, Houston, TX  
Conrad Keydel, Detroit, MI

Joe Knight, New Bern, NC  
\*Ken Lawrence, Jackson, MS  
Kurt Lenz, Sterling Heights, MI  
\*Tom Maeder, San Pedro, CA  
Richard McBride, Glendale, CA  
S.L. McCollum, Boonville, MO  
Howard Medlock, Jr., Lubbock, TX  
Alan Nickel, Seaford, NY  
Jon Ragland, Aurora, CO  
Dick Raney, Elm Grove, WI  
Floyd Rehling, Santa Monica, CA  
Kenn Roman, Phoenix, AZ

Ernest St. Laurent, Mansfield, MA  
Bill Satterwhite, State Farm, VA  
\*Wolfgang Schön, Aumühle, Germany  
Dr. Frank Shively, Dayton, OH  
Alan Thomson, Northwood, NH  
Newell Thompson, Williamsport, PA  
Steve Tillett, Dayton, OH  
Michael Tilley, Canfield, OH  
Lee Warzala, Springfield, IL  
E.R. Wejrowski, Milwaukee, WI  
Mona White, Pioneer, CA  
Dennis Williams, Canton, OH

### 1988 edition of PNC catalog to be ready near end of May

The fourth edition of *The Plate Number Coil Catalog* will be published in May.

The catalog—note the new name—has grown since last year and weighs in at 60 or so pages. The new name was adopted to change the way the book is catalogued by libraries.

Making it bigger are all the PNCs issued since last year and several new features. The 1988 version lists and illustrates more constant varieties than ever before, identifies paper types and adds current postal rates.

On two issues with multiple plate numbers, it provides printing data in table form.

The catalog breaks new price ground. The 18¢ Flag in a strip of five from Plate 6 is listed at \$3,000. Also into four figures is Plate 3, which is priced at \$1,000. Prices last year were, respectively, \$650 and \$400.

The Plate 6 price is notable in that it is the first modern U.S. stamp other than an error to command this high a price.

Appendices provide a chart for determining all Cottrell gap pairings, a precancel gap scarcity table, a table of first-day cover scarcity, checklists for collectors to use in inventorying their collections, a postal rate table since 1981, a paper variety table and a table of strips with plate numbers at the top or no numbers at all.

The catalog sells for \$15, postpaid. Aiding in the work on the catalog were many of the members of the

Plate Number Coil Study Group:

George V.H. Godin, Thom E. Wheeler, Alan Malakoff and Ken Lawrence checked everything. Rich Nazar worked up the paper types. Gerald Clark, Larry G. Haynes, Tom Maeder and Dr. John Greenwood reviewed their subjects of interest. Al Haake and Dennis Chamberlain added their know-how on pricing. A.S. Cibulskas checked the plate varieties.

Kim Cuniberti also volunteered his help.

Illustrations are by Wayne L. Youngblood and Richard J. Nazar.

### Update

#### New stamps

3T1B—Plate 1 of the Conestoga Wagon. Issued Feb. 29.

25T2—Plate 2 of the 25¢ Bread Wagon. April 10. (Vardavas)

25T3—Plate 3 of the 25¢ Bread Wagon. April 18. (Bellamy)

18M3PV—The 18¢ Monument stamp precanceled has now been confirmed untagged on Type I paper. April. (Nazar)

25E1111, 25E1211, 25E1222, 25E2222—Issued March 22.

#### Corrections

In "Update" published in the March issue, the "new stamp" identified as 18T2BP was really Plate 2 of the 8.3¢ Ambulance, 8.3T2B.



Useful tips I**Is this really tagged? Or how to use UV**

Tagging on the 18¢ Washington Monument precancels caused some collectors some difficulty—because they did not know how to check for tagging.

They thought all they needed to do was to hold the stamp at a slant to an ordinary light and they'd see "the tagging."

What they saw was the lacquer.

Several collectors reported all manner of tagging varieties after reading the "How to Exhibit" article about Gerald Clark's method of exhibiting what cannot be seen in daylight (*TPN*, January 1988). Usually they were wrong.

Several collectors reported that all their precanceled Letters and Monument stamps were tagged.

Whenever one of these "finds" was checked under short-

wave ultraviolet, it turned out to be a dud. No tagging. Or no freak.

Several of the "discoverers" then went out and bought a UV lamp. It's the only way to tell.

There are two reasons to use UV in PNC collecting. One is to check the tagging; the other is to sort paper types more easily (Paper I includes brighteners and Paper II does not).

That means it is worthwhile to obtain a light that can do both jobs. One light will not do both unless it can be adjusted for two wave lengths.

To see fluorescence (like the brightener in Paper I) you need a long-wave UV lamp, often called a "black light."

To see the phosphors used to tag stamps, you need a short-wave UV light. This also helps in spotting tagging on British stamps.

Fortunately, Raytech Industries makes a lamp that can do both jobs. The model is the LS-4 Ministar. It sells for about \$79 (list price) and is available from some discounters at about \$65.

Raytech also makes several more expensive models.

One need have no fear of UV. Long-wave UV cannot hurt you. Short-wave can cause sunburn, but glass stops it cold.

A safe and proper method for using shortwave-UV is to wear ordinary eyeglasses. Even plastic glasses will do.

In examining a stamp, you stand above the lamp and point the lamp down at the stamp. You don't ever have to look at the lamp directly, and shouldn't.

What you are looking for is the effect the light has on the stamp.

The phosphors in tagging on PNC coils generally glow a yellowish-green. Some U.S. airmail stamps of the 1960s were tagged with phosphors that glow red-orange.

An interesting note was raised recently by dealer Gene Paquette who said all Bureau of Engraving and Printing precancels are printed without tagging [*He wrote before the discovery of the 18¢ Monument*] "with the following exceptions: [Scott numbers] 1044A, 1384, 1394, 1414a, 1415-18a, 1596, 1606 and 1610.

"These were multi-color stamps, with the exception of 1606, and were printed on one of the following presses: Giori, Huck and the early Andreotti press. None of these presses had the capability to apply precancel overprints.

"Therefore, normally printed, tagged stamps were set aside for later precanceling on a separate platen press.

"They will always be tagged as well as precanceled if the issues were normally tagged."

That last comment refers to one of the undiscovered pleasures of U.S. collecting, the untagged error. Minkus listed and priced them; Scott ignores them.

On Scott 1044A, the tagged stamp was issued in 1967, the untagged in 1961. All the others were supposed to have tagging. Untagged errors are very desirable.

Useful tips II**How to identify B Press on the 8.3¢ Ambulance**

By Larry G. Haynes

I have been asked several times to show people how to tell the 8.3¢ Ambulance B Press stamps from the earlier Cottrell printings if the stamps do not show a joint line and there is no plate number by which to make a judgment.

I believe I have the perfect answer, finally.

There are engraving marks that show as slanting white lines in the green ink of the lettering. On the Cottrell printings, all the letters are fully covered with ink, although one might see a slight hint of the slanting lines in the "A" of "Ambulance" now and then.

The slanting B Press lines look like this:



Of course, there is always the measurement alternative; but it is very difficult to distinguish the difference of less than 0.5mm. I believe the engraving mark method will stand the test of time.

To make the measurement, you need a known sample of one of the strips.

On the Cottrell, the distance from the leftmost point of the "A" to the rightmost point on the "s" of "1860s" is 18.7mm. The same measurement on the B Press version is 18.3mm.

[Ken Lawrence has proposed using a single used stamp of known origin and cutting it across the stamp and then using this as a template, laying the cut stamp over the unknown exemplar. Combining Haynes' method with Lawrence's, one would cut across the known stamp just below "Ambulance."]

If your label says "3-88," it's time to renew!

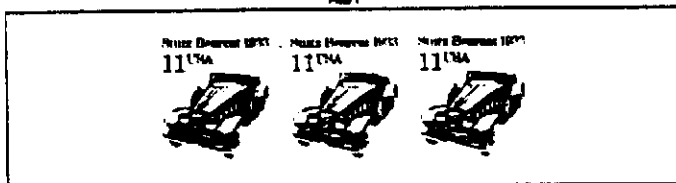
# UNITED STATES

Cottrell Press - PLATE NUMBER COILS - Overall Tagged

Regular (Unprecanceled) Issue of June 11, 1986, with "Joint Line"

11c "Stutz Super Bearcat" Automobile

Plate 1



The top of a Lighthouse page for 11c Stutz, slightly reduced in size.

## Lighthouse expects to ship PNC pages in June

Test pages of Lighthouse Publications' new PNC album show up to six spaces on a page. For tagged PNCs, a strip of three is illustrated, but the box for mounting them is large enough for a strip of five.

The entire text is in English.

A page of 18c Surreys carries the following three-line text (plus a one-line inscription saying "Plate 1" or another number) over each box:

UNITED STATES

Cottrell Press—PLATE NUMBER COILS—  
Overall Tagged

Regular (Unprecanceled) Issue of May 18,  
1981, with "Joint Line"

Pages for precancels are illustrated with a strip of five or a strip of eight when that length is needed to show the gap.

A sample page for the 9.3c Mail Wagon shows six strips, all from Plate 4. The boxes are for No Gap, Gap 2L, Line Gap, Gap 1R, Gap 1 1/2R and Gap 2R. The "No Gap" and "2R" boxes are extended to a potential length of eight stamps.

A test page of 17c precancels in Style AB also accommodates strips of eight.

This length may not be welcomed

by those who wish to collect with two stamps beyond the gap.

But Lighthouse does have "Blanco LB-5 Vertical" pages that will accommodate strips as long as 13 stamps, mounted vertically. Collectors who want to go beyond a PS/8 would be able to use those.

The firm believes that the albums will be available in the United States in June.

Also available are pages for PNC singles. These also come without mounts.

Because of the decline of the value of the dollar, prices on these pages are quite steep. So they have been broken down into parts:

Part 1 for strips is for Cottrell printings. These 62 hingeless pages are \$158 and carry the designation "53 PNC/1 SF."

Part 2 for strips is for all stamps printed on other presses, including the Flag Series. The 32 hingeless pages are "53 PNC/2 SF" and cost \$82.

The singles are for tagged as well as precanceled stamps.

Part 1 is for Cottrell printings and

has 13 pages. The no-mount version is "53 CS/1" and costs \$18.50. The hingeless version is "53 CS/1 SF" and costs \$36.50.

Part 2 is for singles from all other presses and is called "53 CS/2" without mounts (\$19.50) and "53 CS/2 SF" in hingeless form (\$39.00).

All the PNC pages are punched for either the two-post "Perfect" binder (\$51.00) or the 13-ring "Excellent" binder (\$52.00).

Lighthouse recommends the latter binder because it "has the advantage that pages with long strips are less likely to be bent when being turned over."

Lighthouse promises regular updating, saying it hopes to provide annual supplements, "or possibly only every other year, depending on the number of new issues during any one year."

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**  
NOTE: Steve Esratl wrote the above as a news story, but will carry Lighthouse PNC albums as a dealer.

# Hey, why isn't this shown in the catalog?

By Stephen G. Esrati

I am constantly asked to give opinions on Flag stamps where the colors in parts of the flag are wrong, or where the plate numbers are blue instead of black. I am asked about George Washington's raised eyebrow on a Monument stamp or a pimple on his chin.

In a strip of five from Plate 5 of the 22¢ Flag, the top of the Capitol dome is missing. Yet this variety is not shown in the PNC catalog. Why?

All of the above are uncatalogable because a catalog can only show constant varieties, those that recur at predictable intervals. These items do not fill the bill, they are freaks.

In one recent example, A.S. Cibulkas, the indomitable sleuth of varieties, sent in a strip of more than 50 20¢ Pumpers with dramatic markings. At first glance, they recurred 48 stamps apart, leading to a conclusion that these were constant varieties.

But when one took the mark of a stamp on one plate at 2R and compared it with the mark on 2R 48 stamps away, the marks were slightly different. This held true for every marking and proved that we were looking at a press problem, not a plate problem.

Things can and do go wrong on presses that are printing thousands of stamps every second.

The more complex the printing, the greater the chance that something can go wrong. One-color printing is less difficult than multicolor. As soon as stamps are printed in more than one color, two problems arise: alignment and wiping.

Alignment must be perfect for the stamps to look right, especially where colors meet. It is not uncommon to find white space between the blue of the flag's Union and the red of the stripes. That's alignment.

On the 21.1¢ Letters stamps, color

registration is easily seen in the plate numbers. Plates must line up perfectly for the numbers to be aligned and spaced right. The slightest variation throws the numbers into a connoption fit.

Wiping, also must be perfect, otherwise colors off one color's inking roller will appear where another color should be, or mix the colors.

Old wiper blades can miss spots. This changes the way a stamp looks, but it is not a constant variety.

Exceptions to this must be 20¢ and 22¢ Flag stamps in which one color is wrong: the brick-red 20¢ and the various blue stamps where the color should be black. These are freaks, but it occurred on enough stamps to make them collectible as major color errors.

They do belong in a catalog (even in Scott as major color varieties).

But the same cannot apply to other freaks. Sorry.

## New Issues, new varieties

My list #8 is still valid. Here are offers for PS/5 strips received since it was mailed (add 15% for PS/6; deduct 10% for PS/3):

Cat	Description	F	VF	NF	S
3.4T1-2	Chill roller offset (This is in PS/10)	20.00			
3T1B	Conestoga Wagon	1.15	1.25	1.50	1.85
5T3-4	"T" tagging break at 2L			7.50	
same	No plate number			3.50	
5T1-2V	Color variety	13.50	15.00	18.75	22.50
same	No plate number	\$3 per stamp,		any length	
8.3T2B	B Press, #2	2.30	2.50	3.00	3.70
8.5T2B	#2	2.30	2.50	3.00	3.70
12T1BPB	Press	3.60	4.00	5.00	6.00
2SE	All 4 numbers	3.60	4.00	5.00	6.00
18M3P	Tagged, dry gum	5.50	6.00	7.50	9.00
18M3P	Untagged, WANTED				
25F?	Due out soon	3.60	4.00	5.00	6.00

5% discount on orders over \$25.

10% discount on orders over \$100.

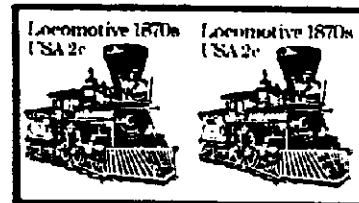
5% added discount to PNC<sup>®</sup> members.

**Stephen G. Esrati**

P.O. Box 20130  
Shaker Heights, OH 44120-0130

☎ (216) 561-9393

## Special Offer!



I have a limited number of imperf Locomotive pairs (#1897Ae VF NH) at \$50 postpaid, insured.

**Wm B. Robinson**

1641 Bruce Ln.  
Green Bay, WI 54313

17700



# Plate and mat varieties — Part IX

By A.S. Cibulskas

A multitude of plate cracks were submitted by M.A. Courtney, although confirmation copies were available in only a few cases.

Most of these came from off-sale fractionals, particularly the 10.9¢ Hansom Cab.

All these flaws are very obvious, and in some cases even striking. Magnification was not needed to see them.

All are reported below. But confirmations are needed.

My inspection of these, including microscopic examination, indicates that all are true plate cracks, not extraneous markings or other freaks.

However, confirmation copies are needed to define them as constant varieties. I have tried to describe them fully and believe they are readily findable if, indeed, they are constant.

Good luck in your hunting.

If you have success with any of these flaws, please let me know at 28 Westwood Rd., Stamford, Conn.

## 1¢ Omnibus

a. Plate flaw on plate number "6." Looks like an "8." Confirmation? (Courtney)

## 3¢ Conestoga Wagon

- Rock on road. Constant at 23R in roll of 500. (Lindquist)
- Missing plate number. The second plate number in a roll of 100 and 52 stamps past the first number is missing. In addition, the bottom 15%-20% of the left wheel is missing to give a flat-tire effect. Constant variety of foreign matter during printing? Additional finds, if any, would define. (Grandahl)
- Several verbal reports of plate crack varieties at 11L, but no examples submitted to date. (*Editor's note:* See Page 58 of this issue.)

## 4.9¢ Buckboard

- "Small buggy whips." Mat or plate variety? Probably the former, but found only on one roll to date. Short stub (about 0.5mm) emanating from middle of the left side rail of the seat of the buckboard at 1R of Plates 1 and 2. (Hendricks)

## 5.2¢ Sleigh

- Plate crack above the first "8" of the date extending diagonally to the top edge of the stamp at 2L. Strip is from Plate 2 tagged. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Circle over "S" in "Sleigh" at 1R on Plate 3, tagged. Possible cause, according to Ken Lawrence, is a popped blister in the chrome plating of the plate. Two identical copies confirm constancy. (Courtney)

## 8.3¢ Ambulance (Cottrell)

- Mat variety. Plates 1-2, Gap 1L. Double break in top precancel line. About half the vertical part of the "T" missing at 4R. (Eastman)

## 8.3¢ Ambulance (B Press)

- Accent-like mark between "b" and "u" in "Ambulance." Constant plate variety at 11R. (Maves)

## 9.3¢ Mail Wagon

- "Waving W" plate crack starting at top right edge of the

"W," and extending upwards at a 45-degree angle for about 1mm on the numbered stamp. Confirmation? (Courtney)

## 10.1¢ Oil Wagon

- Ink dot inside the zero of the denomination at 11 o'clock. Precancel, Plate 2, 1R. (Maves)

## 10.9¢ Hansom Cab

- Plate crack on "1" in plate number, tagged and precanceled. The crack starts about 1mm above the "1," and proceeds straight down to the cap of the numeral, then faintly and diagonally through the plate number, then strongly from the bottom right of the number to the edge of the stamp. (Courtney)
- Plate crack parallel to the left stem of the plate number "1" on precancel. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Possible plate crack on Plate 2, precanceled. A line starts at the bottom right of the plate number and rises at a 30-degree angle to about 0.5mm above the number. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Plate crack starts at bottom of "U" in "USA" and goes down to "u" of "bulk." On precanceled Plate 2. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Plate crack on Plate 2, precanceled, starts from bottom right of driver's footrest and proceeds diagonally to 1 o'clock on outer edge of wheel. Very obvious. About 3mm long. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Multiple plate cracks inside wheel of numbered stamp on Plate 2, precanceled. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Horizontal plate crack from "S" to "A" of "USA" on precanceled Plate 2. Crack arches downward on numbered stamp. Confirmation? (Courtney)
- Plate crack inside "U" of "USA." on precanceled Plate 4. Starts at the bottom right and is parallel to upper portion of the "U." Confirmation? (Courtney)

## 12.5¢ Pushcart

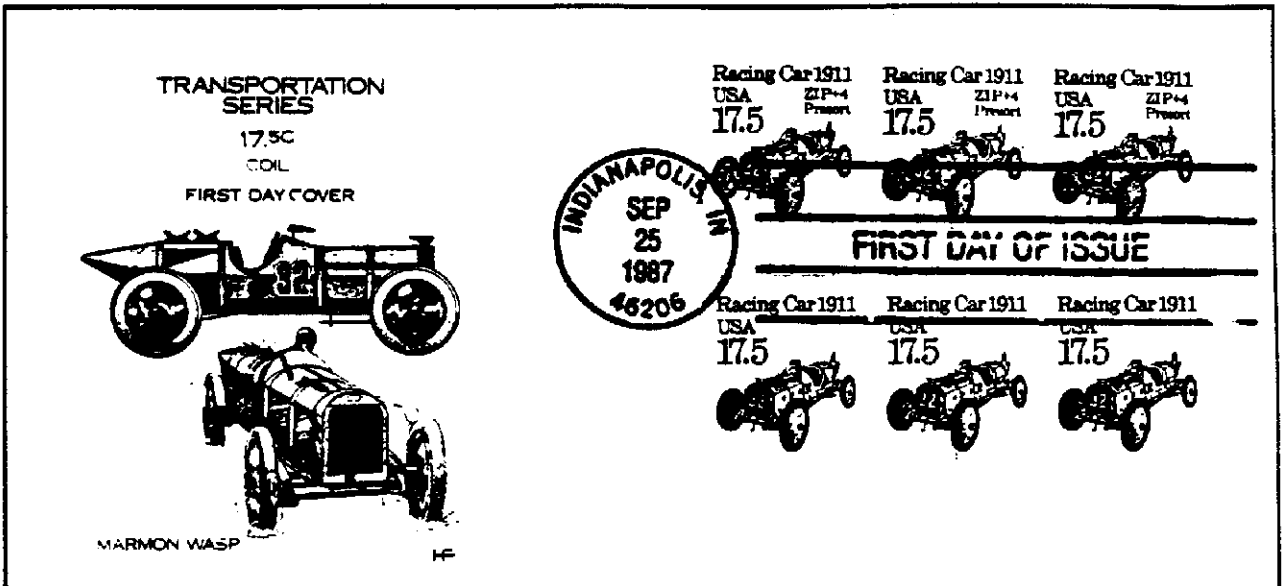
- Miniature flying hyphen under the "r" of "cart" at 11R on Plate 1, Gap 10R. Confirmed as constant. (Maves)

## 20¢ Flag

- Ink dot at right bottom margin between the design and the edge of the stamp at 3R on Plate 14, precanceled. Constant. (Courtney)

## 22¢ Flag

- Possible plate variety on Plate 2. "Flying saucer" on the numbered stamp in about the same position as the known variety on Plate 6. Constancy needs to be defined. (Ernst)
- Angled plate number. Plate 2. Number tilted to the right. Constant. (Warzala)
- Inking variety. Top loop of the "2" missing in plate number 20. (Warzala)
- Inking variety on Plate 8 results in partial or total omission of top loop of plate number. (Warzala)
- Inking variety on Plate 8 in which bottom right of "8" is missing on Plate 8. (Warzala)
- Low entry of plate number. Plate 13. (Numerous reports)
- Plate variety. A dot on 15L of Plate 19 in the part of the stamp where a plate number would be found. Constant. (Hendricks)



**A Farnam rarity?**

This House of Farnam cover shows both a service-inscribed and a tagged strip. That makes it rare, because the firm was dissatisfied by the cancelation, which hit the plate number. It redid all the 17.5T covers, but doing it with both types of strip would have been too costly. In the second attempt, Farnam did not prepare covers with precancels. This is from the early batch. Of course some collectors made their own Farnams, too. (Courtesy Ken Lawrence)

**'Parrot surgery, Calling Dr. Cibulskas'**

Is the "Waving W" on 10.1T1 15R, mentioned in TPN III-2 the same as my "Perched Parrot"?

Tom Maeder  
San Pedro, Calif.

*In reply:* This is a case for Dr. A. S. Cibulskas. Your diagnosis, please, Doctor.

**Dumpsters, again**

The "dumpster" letter hit home. I had the same problem locally.

I was told it was post office property until picked up by a refuse company. It was suggested I contact the incinerator company and perhaps I could go through the material there.

I suggested it was a form of recycling. They were not amused!

Later, while talking with a friendly insider, I was told the inspectors were concerned with the passing of "items" out of the system to someone outside knowing what to look for.

F. M. Arndt  
Bellingham, Wash.

**Letters to TPN**

**Teacher's pet**

Keep up the good, excellent work. You rate an "A" from this teacher.

Alice Archie  
Wauwatosa, Wisc.

**Program for Apple II**

Does anyone have a computer program for collecting PNCs that will run on an Apple II? I know there are plenty of programs around for IBM style, but I need one for my small 64k limits. Any help would be appreciated.

Walter P. Esperza  
P.O. Box 787  
Azusa, CA 91702-0787

**1988 PNC Catalog**

The price will be \$15 (\$16.05 in Ohio) but you can save \$2 (to \$13.91 in Ohio) if you order before May 31.

Steve Esrati

\$1 more off to PNC members.

**Stung by Honeybee**

I'm upset about the new Honeybee coil. My gripe? USPS was just telling us the reason why no 22¢ coil stamp was issued in the Transportation Series: no press availability, inventory problems, too many designs for one value. So with the Breadwagon available and the obligatory Flag stamp scheduled, how can a third 25¢ coil be justified?

Stephen Sickerman  
Winter Haven, Fla.

**Traders**

I have duplicate PNC FDCs and mint strips, including scarce ones. I need many commercial junk mail covers with PNCs, and unusual nonphilatelic PNC usages.

**Ken Lawrence**

P.O. Box 3568  
Jackson, MS 39207

# 3 views on precancel sales

“ Several philatelic publications [starting with *The Plate Number*] have recently stated that it is illegal for collectors and dealers to sell mint precancels. This is not accurate and has caused confusion.

To support this misstatement of facts, these publications have quoted a single paragraph from the *Domestic Mail Manual*

The paragraph (No. 143.22) states, "Precanceled stamps may be purchased for the purpose of paying postage or for philatelic purposes. Permit holders may not sell unused precanceled stamps obtained under their permit."

Their interpretation of this is that no mint precancels can be resold. This is in error....

Nothing prohibits the sale of mint precancels purchased through the Philatelic Sales Division or other philatelic outlets....

Since the only penalty for selling unused precanceled stamps is the revocation of a mailing permit, paragraph 143.22 has absolutely no effect on collectors who don't possess permits.

Permit holders—and only permit holders—are prevented from reselling precanceled stamps purchased under their permits. No restrictions apply to stamps obtained through other means....

This is clearly a case of a situation that should never have developed. DMM article 143.22 should have been changed at the time the USPS revised its policy on precancels.

"No cause for confusion"

Editorial in *Linn's*  
March 7, 1988

“ There is nothing in the DMM that prohibits a permit holder from donating precanceled stamps to another organization or individual. As you have been previously cautioned, you may not sell stamps you have purchased as a permit holder and stamps you have purchased as a collector may

## Quotable Quotes

only be used in collection activity.

Excerpt from letter from  
Frank J. Auer  
Manager, Mailing Requirements  
Marketing and Communications  
Dept.  
Milwaukee Division  
United States Postal Service  
Sept. 21, 1987

“ You made the observation in your letter that every dealer in the Transportation Series of coil stamps is violating the law every time he sells a precancel. The Postal Service anticipates that when a permit holder buys precanceled stamps from his post office he will

either use them for the purpose of paying postage on his mail, or for the purpose of adding them to his own stamp collection. Purchases may be made by nonpermit holders for collection purposes only. It is not anticipated that precanceled stamps will be bought, either by permit holders or nonpermit holders, for the purpose of reselling them.

Excerpt from letter from  
Ernest J. Collins  
General Manager  
Business Requirements Division  
Office of Classification and  
Rates Administration  
United States Postal Service  
Washington, D.C.  
Nov. 25, 1987

## Linn's issues 4th yearbook

*Linn's* has put out its fifth *U.S. Stamp Yearbook* (\$14.95 from *Linn's Stamp News*, P.O. Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365), and again it's a beaut.

Each 1987 PNC is detailed in full and even some of the essays are shown.

The amount of background information is astonishing and useful.

According to author Fred Boughner, "This 10¢ Canal Boat stamp ... replaced no other issue. At the time of its release, no other 10¢ coil was on active sale. The stamp was intended to pay the 10¢ surcharge for oversize items ... which weighed one ounce or less....

"The USPS announced that, beginning with this stamp, all future coil stamps would be produced in coils of 100 for the convenience of stamp collectors."

If you check the data for later issues with service inscriptions, you will quickly discover that BEP did not print rolls of 100 of these stamps (although it did on the tagged versions).

What happens now when new fractionals will appear only as precancels?

## Book review

There is one criticism of the entire series of *Linn's* handbooks that one would hope will be addressed at some future point.

Much of the data given is incomplete because it covers only the year of issue. So it would be nice if *Linn's* would see its way clear to update previous material in some form.

For example, printing quantities probably went up when stamps were sent back to press. Quantities distributed, also, probably went up in years following the year of issue.

But later information is lacking. Perhaps a tabular supplement would be appropriate.

This is no idle cry. Some of us have always been puzzled by the disparity between printing totals and supply. Some stamps with huge printing runs are hard to find; others with low printing runs are seemingly plentiful.

We probably cannot get data for stamps printed before 1983, the first yearbook, but we would be most thankful for distribution and printing data that is now sadly incomplete.

# 'Crack' turns out to be chill-roller flaw

The "quotation marks" on Plate 2 of the 4¢ Stagecoach have been known for more than a year. But there's an exciting new find on that strip—if you have a strip of five.

Dr. Howard Winer examined his and saw a chill-roller doubling all over the stamp at 3L. It is most pronounced around "USA."

Which raises a question. Are the "quotation marks" really a constant plate variety? Or are they part of the doubling?

The doubling, incidentally, is not a new report. It was originally reported in *Linn's* in 1982. But this is the first report linking the doubling and a cataloged plate variety.

\*\*\*

There have been no announcements from the Postal Service about the experiments with the 22¢ Flag test stamp other than to say the results were satisfactory.

As you will recall, most of the stamps sold to collectors by philatelic boutiques came in rolls of 100. Rolls of 3,000 were also printed, but most post offices never saw these.

The question right along has been: "Where were the large rolls used com-

## Postal rate hike forces 1st raise in charges to *TPN* subscribers

A 33% increase in the cost of mailing *TPN* by bulk mail, coupled with an increase of 16% in the cost of sending it by first-class mail has necessitated an increase in charges.

Those subscribers who desire first-class mailing will have to pay \$3.50 over the cost of their subscription, up from \$2.50. Foreign subscribers will also be asked to pay that amount. They previously paid nothing extra.

*TPN's* subscription renewal drive was a success, with a 71% renewal rate as of April 22 and more still dribbling in.

That equals 318 paid subscribers despite a third of all subscriptions expiring with Issue 2.

Several renewing subscribers sent in

## All the PNC news that fits we print

mercially?"

As the 22¢ rate was nearing its end, stocks of the test stamps were apparently shipped out to post offices. After all, a 22¢ stamp is a 22¢ stamp, whether it has a "T" in the margin or not.

Rich Nazar of the Plate Number Coils Study Group reports receipt of a commercial flier from Fairways Machinery in Detroit using such a stamp. The cancel was Dec. 15, 1987.

What we still do not know is whether this Detroit mailing was a late part of the experiment or an early part of the wider distribution of test stamps.

\*\*\*

While working over the draft of the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog*, Nazar also made news in his specialty: paper types.

In the last issue of *TPN* it was reported that the 9.3¢ *Mall Wagon* from plates 2 and 4 with the gap at 3L was the only Cottrell printing ever found on Type IIa paper.

Scratch that. Nazar examined the

strips supplied by Kim Cuniberti and ruled that the paper is Type II. That means we have yet to find any Cottrell printings on Type IIa.

"It was a tough call," Nazar said. "It's really close, but the grooves are not even as they are in a comparison copy of a 7.4¢. I wish I knew the causes of differences in gumming."

The catalog will list it as Type II.

Then Nazar turned to the 3¢ *Cone-stoga Wagon*. It turns out to be on a completely new type of paper, even though at first glance it looks like a Type II paper.

Nazar is attempting to track down specifics.

\*\*\*

Bill McMurray won a silver at Midpex in Middletown, Conn., for his "U.S. Flag and Transportation Coil Issues of 1981." It was a 10-frame, 9-page exhibit.

Then he went to Sonex and cleaned up: a gold medal, the BIA President's Award and the Most Popular Exhibit Award.

McMurray reports that there will be several PNC exhibits in September at the Omaha stamp show. It may be the first time PNC exhibits vie for the gold against each other.

An exhibit of Cottrell Transportation Series issues by Darrell Ertzberger won a vermeil and the APS Medal for post-1940 material at Cleveland's Garfield Perry show in March.

\*\*\*

Putting 20¢ Officials back on sale to meet the new rates is not the main reason why prices are falling on that and the 22¢ "D" official.

A man in Massachusetts advertised whole boxes full of both values.

Several dealers tried to buy him out to protect their investment in these expensive strips. But he lied, telling each buyer: "This is all I have." It wasn't. There was plenty more.

*TPN* hears that one of the dealers sicked the postal inspectors on this guy.

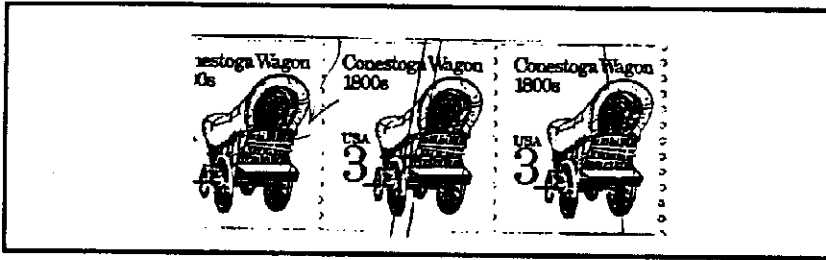
some stamps to help defray the deficit. While it would be counterproductive to thank them individually, this serves as a "Thank you" note to them.

Members of PNC<sup>3</sup> who renew from now on should indicate their membership and subtract \$2 from the \$10 renewal cost.

Members are also eligible for one free 25-word adlet each year, and it would be best to send it with renewals.

### New dealer

The White Birch Inc. is the name of the new stamp dealership set up by Joseph Coveney of Buffalo. The PNC dealer is at P.O. Box 91, Orchard Park, NY 14127-0091.



E.H. Cutler's sketch of cracks at 21R and 11L on the same strip of Plate 1.

## Cachet maker discovers 2 cracks on 3¢ Conestoga

When the 3¢ Conestoga Wagon first came out, Al Haake found a "Burning Conestoga Wagon" at 11L on some of the rolls he was stripping out.

That variety is listed in the 1988 *Plate Number Coil Catalog*.

According to Haake, the crack runs up from the top of the wagon and makes it appear to be on fire.

Later, E.H. Cutler, who publishes *The Stamp Collector's Registry* and prepares FDCs under the Key Cachets marque, found an even more remarka-

ble crack, also at 11L.

He prepared a handful of FDCs showing the crack, but has not yet decided to sell these.

But he is selling mint strips of three, with the crack in the middle, at \$25.

Cutler also found a horizontal crack at 21R.

Collectors wishing to contact Cutler can call him at (901) 382-5639 or may write to Key Philatelic Publishing Co., Inc., P.O. Box 280965, Memphis, TN 38168.

## ADLETS

**Classified ads are 15 cents a word. There is no charge for your address.**

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

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**BUYING PNC FDCs.** Write first Thomas Gift, 1959 Haviland Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10472. (4-90)

**WANTED:** By collector. Wrapper labels from any PNC coil rolls as collateral material for exhibit. Let me know what you have. Let's swap information on varieties, colors. David E. B.-Laverigne, 27 Braddock Park, Boston, MA 02116.

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

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