

## No Honeybees printed from November through April, BEP plate report says

No 25¢ Honeybees were sent to press from about Nov. 15, 1988, through the end of April of this year, according to a new plate-activity report from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

Other developments revealed by the report, which covered the months from January through April and was sent out

in late August, include:

- Plate 1 of the 3¢ Conestoga Wagon, which we have known to have had a serious crack through at least three rows of stamps since the stamp was being prepared for first-day covers, was canceled on Jan. 30 with 528,000 impressions. No Plate 2 was prepared during the four

months covered by the report.

- Intaglio Plate 4 for the 25¢ Honeybee was prepared in April and was made with 480 subjects (20 rows of 48 stamps).

- Four plates were prepared for the un-

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## 3 special reports on FDCs

### • How to catalog

By George V.H. Godin

I have strongly opposed the catalog listing of certain first-day covers: those bearing plate numbers that were issued long after the grace period for those stamps had expired.

I knew that these were obtainable by two simple methods:

- Holding USPS-damaged covers beyond the expiration date.
- Intentionally damaging properly serviced covers that came through intact.

In either case it would be possible to

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### • How to collect

By Glenn A. Estus

Prior to 1981, coil stamps were not usually available with plate numbers (except in a few examples that were the result of production miscuts).

In 1981, USPS began releasing sheet stamps with a new system of plate numbers. This was an attempt to confront

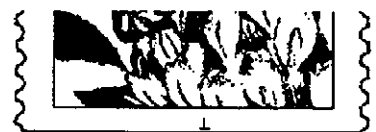
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### • Rules changed

The Postal Service reacted quickly when it learned from reports in the philatelic press that "rare" first-day covers were being created by bending USPS rules (see Page 109 of this issue). Under the new rules, replacement covers may carry only stamps with the same plate numbers as on the damaged FDCs.

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## Koepp, Maves find 10 rolls of Plate 1 Honeybees with uncut plate numbers



Untruncated "1" (left) from first printing and truncated, smaller "1" from later printings. **More on Honeybee on Pages 97 to 99 and 112.**

Jerry Koepp, owner of Stamps 'n' Stuff in West Des Moines, Iowa, and collector Anthony Maves have found 10 rolls of 3,000 of the first printing of the 25¢ Honeybee from Plate 1. The plate numbers are 0.75mm tall and not cut down.

The Maves-Koepp stamps are not from the test run that was printed and tagged

on the Goebel Optiforma offset press before the intaglio printing on the C Press. On those stamps the black intaglio printing was on top of the tagging. All stamps from that run are believed to have been destroyed in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. (This test print-

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Paid circulation this issue is 414.

## Starting Year 5

This issue completes Volume IV. In all, you have received 112 pages this year full of all the PNC news, views, and advertising it was possible to present. All for \$15 a year. In effect, it's quite a bargain.

*The Plate Number* is a work of love. I spend more than 200 hours per issue. I set all the type, do all the layouts, print the original pages, prepare the art, solicit the ads, keep the books, update subscribers' addresses. I also maintain the detailed data bases of PNCs used for the catalog and for research by my associates.

In addition, I consult frequently with other members of the PNC Study Group, and they also put in a considerable amount of work.

The hope is that you, the reader, feel you are getting what you paid for. Being a magazine put out by collectors for collectors cannot be equated with publications put out by large corporations with big staffs and huge resources. This, quite honestly, is a shoestring operation. It just about breaks even (if telephone bills are not included in the budget).

Fortunately, the list of subscribers has grown to more than 400. At one time, my wife and I had difficulty finding enough people to whom to send free copies so we could meet the minimum of 200 needed for bulk mail.

## The Plate Number

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I am not asking you to pay more for your subscription, but I would ask you to help by letting our advertisers know you saw their ads here and, perhaps, encouraging your dealer to use *TPN* for his ads. Surely some dealers who spend thousands on PNC advertising can be persuaded to place ads here, too.

And, since this is the last issue for 1989, this is the time to wish you well for the upcoming holidays and the new year. Happy hunting! *sg*

## LETTERS: *BEP need not stop presses to join two rolls of paper*

In regard to David G. Lee's answer to a question in *The United States Specialist*, quoted on Page 82 of the September *TPN*:

It is not necessary to stop the BEP rotary presses at the end of a roll. They are all fitted with two-roll automatic flying-paster feed systems.

In regard to the discussion of coiling equipment in the same issue:

We should think of all BEP presses and coilers as systems. The Cottrell presses were part of the Huck system, and the Huck coilers were made to handle the 18-row product from the Cottrell presses. The C press and its coilers are both Goebel products. The only coilers at BEP are the Huck and the Goebel.

The essentially manual system employed on all Stickney and the first (384-subject) Cottrell coils could only accommodate webs of 8 or 10 subjects across. That system was in use until 1959. That was BEP's main coiling system from 1914 until 1959, when it was superseded by the Huck-Cottrell system. Even after the 18-row Cottrell coil system was in full production, precancels had to be printed on the Stickney presses and processed by the old system as late as 1962.

The Huck coilers were built and installed in 1958 and 1960, custom designed for the 18-row Cottrell format.

Giori then supplied the B Press to fit

the 18-row Huck coilers. Goebel designed the C Press and its coilers, both in use since 1982, in the 20-row format.

Ken Lawrence

Jackson, Miss.

### No prices on souvenir pages

*The PNC Catalog* is very informative, but I found it lacked information concerning PNC Souvenir Pages. It only lists the PNC numbers, but no current prices.

As a PNC collector, including Souvenir Pages, the catalog did not give me all the information I thought it would include.

Gerald Swiss  
Boca Raton, Fla.

*In reply:* We'd love to price them, but how? The catalog reflects the market. If we tried to price these, all the prices would say "N.A."

### So many seam lines. Why?

Something has been on my mind ever since seam line positions began to increase so fast on Plate 2 of the D Press Honeybee. There are now 22 or 23 positions. Were the presses really started and stopped (with adjustments in between) twenty-odd times? It seems to me that each seam-line position represents a new startup of the D Press. Why? Was it part of the effort to keep the black intaglio

bee and the plate number from bouncing all over the place? Food for thought.

I eagerly await each new copy of *TPN* with all its good information.

Alan Thomson  
Northwood, N.H.

*In reply:* Whoa, there! The idea that each movement of a precancel gap, vertical tagging gap, or Honeybee seam line signals a press stop is only a theory. But as long as you ask, you're entitled to a theoretical answer.

We now know from the plate-activity reports for the Honeybee offset plates used on the 18-row intaglio Plate 1 (see *TPN*, Sept. 1989, page 81) that many offset plates had to be replaced during a run. While we cannot be sure that each such plate change would cause a press stop, it is likely. Thus, plate registration may no longer be the reason for constant starting and stopping.

Furthermore, we know that the D Press was booked up, causing postponement of Honeybee printing for five months.

But even the idea that all those plates reported about on Page 81 were printed on the C Press is theoretical, based only on that fact that many of these offset plates were assigned as 20-row plates but went to press or were canceled as 18-row plates. According to BEP, the C

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# Honeybee plate production easy to figure out

By Ken Lawrence

The history of 25¢ Honeybee coil production is not difficult to reconstruct, if allowances are made for the usual number of gaps and typographical errors in the plate-activity reports. In fact, it is easier for the Honeybees than for most stamps, because the offset plates were manufactured in sets of five, so the mistakes in reporting for one or another can easily be corrected by examining the other plates of the same set.

Each set of plates consisted of one plate each for each of the four process colors, and one for the PMS (Pantone Matching System) yellow. In reporting the plates, suffix digits were assigned even though they weren't printed on the stamps, and each suffix began with "1" for each different subject size. Thus, the 450-subject offset plates include a number 1 set of five plates, a number 2 set, a number 3 set, and so forth. Then the 500-subject plates begin with set 1, then set 2, etc. Likewise for 432- and 480-subject plates. Each set includes a yellow, a magenta, a cyan, a black, and a PMS yellow plate.

Eliminating the likely mistakes in reporting, the sequence looks like this:

#### Plates assigned with 450 subjects

Set 1	4/5/88
Set 2	4/11/88
Set 3	5/3/88
Set 4	5/31/88
Set 5	6/1/88
Set 6	6/18/88
Set 7	6/20/88, plus continuing plates numbered up to 10 overlapping the next group.

#### Plates assigned with 500 subjects

Set 1	7/8/88
Set 2	7/8/88
Set 3	7/25/88
Set 4	8/2/88
Set 5	8/2/88, plus continuing plates numbered up to 10 overlapping the next group.

#### Plates assigned with 432 subjects

Set 1	8/12/88
Set 2	8/12/88
Set 3	9/23/88
Set 4	9/24/88, plus continuing plates numbered up to 7.

#### Plates assigned with 480 subjects

Set 1	10/14/88
Set 2	10/14/88
Set 3	10/22/88
Set 4	10/26/88
Set 5	11/1/88
Set 6	11/14/88, plus continuing plates up to number 8.

For each group, the late plates following the sets were probably replacements for worn plates or individual colors only, to complete specific press runs. Charted

this way, Honeybees were printed from 450-subject (18x25) offset plates on the Goebel Optiforma press combined with (probably) 864-subject (18x48) Sleeve 1 on the Goebel C press from early April 1988 to the end of June.

In July and early August, BEP still was using the Optiforma/C combination, but this time from the 500-subject (20x25) offset plates and the 960-subject (20x48) Sleeve 2.

In Mid-August, production switched to the combined offset-intaglio Goebel D press, using 432-subject (18x24) offset plates and 864-subject (18x48) Sleeve 1, continuing at least into late September.

In October and November, production continued on the D press using 480-subject (20x24) offset plates and 960-subject (20x24) Sleeve 2.

We have some total-impression reports for certain Goebel Optiforma offset plates only, but the maximum possible is 3,286,480 450-subject and 2,814,368 500-subject, using the cyan 450-subject reports and the black 500-subject reports. Multiplying those figures out, we

have a total of 2.9 billion Honeybee stamps printed from the Optiforma/C press runs. As yet, we have no reports on D press impressions.

We know that spoilage was high on the two-press printings, but these figures suggest it was staggering, since most of us know that C press rolls are scarcer than D press rolls. During the first month, 1.2 billion Honeybee stamps were shipped, the only figure we have so far. But the first month is usually bigger than the entire next year for a new stamp, so let's generously guess that another 1 billion have been shipped in Fiscal Year 1989. Rumor has it that the vaults contain another billion Honeybees awaiting shipment. So, generously estimating a total of 3.2 billion Honeybees manufactured, if 2 billion were printed on the D press, a conservative estimate of the observed ratio, we would have to conclude that about 60% of the Optiforma/C press printings were spoiled. It's no wonder the Postal Service had to postpone release of the Honeybee coil stamp twice. □

## Constant plate and mat varieties—Part XXIV

By A.S. Cibulskas

### 4.9¢ Buckboard

a. "Flying mud" on precanceled plates 1 and 2, gap 1R. Constant mat variety at 2R. Looks like a numeral 7 between the wheel and the "s" of "1880s". (Weber)

### 5.3¢ Elevator

a. Black, crescent-shaped mark to the right of the "s" of "1890s". Constant at 21L. (Washburn)

### 7.6¢ Carreta

a. Plate 2. Dot inside the "7" about equidistant from the middle of the vertical portion, the junction of the vertical and horizontal portions, and the left end of the horizontal portion. Constant at 1R. (SAdams)

### 13.2¢ Coal Car

a. Plate crack or gouge results in a crescent shape just above and slightly to the left of the "1" of "Coal." Constant at 20R. (SAdams)

b. Plate crack or gouge above and slightly to the left of the "1" of "Coal." Appearance of a straight line slash about 1mm long at about a 45-degree angle to the top of the "1." Constant at 23R (SAdams)

### 17¢ Electric Auto

a. Plate 4, precanceled, Type B, gap 3L. Constant mat variety. Black comma below the "A" of "Auto." Under magnification, it resembles a blobbed "4" or "9." Constant on 1L stamp. (Ahrens)

### 25¢ Flag

a. Plates 1 and 7, missing ink varieties. The bottom parts of the respective plate numbers are missing. (McBride, Hill)

b. Plate 7. "Falling Boulder." Plate crack or gouge results in a round mark above the left side of the mountain. Constant at 2L. (Tillett)

c. Various plate numbers, but especially Plate 10: Numerous reports of red inking in the green tree area. Sizes and shapes of the red range from match head size to lima bean size.

### 25¢ Honeybee

a. Plate 2, D Press. Inking variety on the intaglio plate. Excessive ink on "25 USA" causes enlargement of the numbers and letters. All very obvious, especially the "S" of "USA, which is two to three times its normal size. Constant at 5L and subsequently found on multiple sources in rolls of 100. (Cibulskas) □

# BEP reports Honeybee Plate 4, Carreta Plate 3

Continued from Page 95

denominated "F" stamp coils, one each in magenta, cyan, yellow and black, for the Andreotti Press. [The design will show a tulip, so "F" is for "Flower," a BEP spokesman told Tom Maeder at STaMpsHOW 89.]

• Two "F" stamp plates (yellow and black) were canceled in January after only 9,300 impressions. These plates had been assigned in November 1988, but were not reported at that time. These plates were 18x24, so they could have printed a maximum of 167,400 PNCs if printed with plates of the other colors.

• The "ZIP+4" precancel style of the 7.1¢ Tractor was assigned in April.

• Plate 3 of the 7.6¢ Carreta was assigned in April and was printed since April. This number was reported by a collector in the October issue of *Coil Line* and is now available from dealers.

• New numbers were reported for Plate 9 of the 25¢ Flag Over Yosemite and Plate 2 of the 15¢ Tugboat. Stamps from both plates were found by collectors before the BEP report.

The largest number of new entries for stamps that have plate numbers were new press runs for precanceled stamps. All current precancels except the 21¢ Railroad Mail Car were sent back to press at least once.

Here's a rundown:

5.3¢ Elevator Plate 1	March 5
7.6¢ Carreta 2	Jan. 31
	Feb. 24
	March 9
	April (no date)
8.4¢ Wheel Chair 1	March 1
10.1¢ Oil Wagon 3	Jan. 3, 1989
	March 13
13.2¢ Coal Car 1	Feb. 7
16.7¢ Popcorn Wagon 1	Feb. 27
	March 28
	April 1
	April 5
20.5¢ Fire Engine 1	April 5

What's odd about the Wheel Chair is that it is from Plate 1, the B Press version. Plate 2, an 18-row C Press version, went to press only once in August.

The only stamp without precancel that was sent to press during the four months was Plate 2 of the 20¢ Cable Car, a second time to press for this plate.

What all this tells us is that most of the current precancels are being used quite heavily, requiring reprinting. The stamp that did not show up in this report, the 21¢ Mail Car, had multiple runs off two plates last year.

As could be expected, the 16.7¢ Popcorn Wagon has had the most reruns,

## Honeybee assignments since March

SUFFIX	COLOR	PLATE	ASSIGNED	PRESS	SUBL.	NOTES
7	Cyan	182403-07	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
9	Magenta	182404-09	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
7	Process yellow	182405-07	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
7	PMS yellow	182406-07	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
8	Black	182407-08	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
8	Cyan	182408-08	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
10	Magenta	182409-10	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
8	Process yellow	182410-08	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
8	PMS yellow	182411-08	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
9	Black	182412-09	Mar 27, 1989	902	480	
9	Cyan	182436-09	Mar 28, 1989	902	480	
11	Magenta	182437-11	Mar 28, 1989	902	480	
9	Process yellow	182438-09	Mar 28, 1989	902	480	
9	PMS yellow	182439-09	Mar 28, 1989	902	480	
10	Black	182440-10	Mar 28, 1989	902	480	
11	Black	182452-11	Mar 31, 1989	902	480	
12	Black	182453-12	Mar 31, 1989	902	480	
13	Black	182493-13	Apr 5, 1989	902	480	
14	Black	182494-14	Apr 5, 1989	902	480	
15	Black	182526-15	Apr 8, 1989	902	480	
16	Black	182642-16	Apr 25, 1989	902	480	
17	Black	182643-17	Apr 25, 1989	902	480	
10	Cyan	182669-10	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
12	Magenta	182670-12	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
10	Process yellow	182671-10	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
10	PMS yellow	182672-10	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
18	Black	182673-18	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
11	Cyan	182674-11	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
13	Magenta	182675-13	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
11	Process yellow	182676-11	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
11	PMS yellow	182677-11	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	
19	Black	182678-19	Apr 27, 1989	902	480	

three in 1988 and three during the period included in this report. The stamp serves to meet the basic bulk-mail rate.

The short press run on the two plates of the "F" stamp may have been experimental in nature. As is known, BEP had to destroy the 25¢ Honeybees it printed on phosphored paper.

It had been known that "F" stamps would be printed on such paper, as well, and the run may have been intended to determine whether the stamps would show enough tagging under the yellow and black inks to allow postal machinery to use them.

This, however, is pure conjecture. We know nothing of the two other plates (magenta and cyan) that would have been assigned at the same time and we have no reports that any other "F" stamp plates were sent to press. Missing from

the January-April report were the details needed to figure out the "E" stamps.

Lack of activity with Honeybees may mean that the theory expressed in the last issue of *TPN* that all reported printing so far was for intaglio Plate 1 may be untrue.

Since Honeybees have been known since their day of issue with the plate number of Plate 2, either:

- we are missing a lot of plate activity on the Honeybee;
- or the theory is wrong that all reported "to press" activity for offset plates was printed on intaglio Plate 1.

On the other hand, BEP data are often incomplete. For just one example, we have had no report—ever—that intaglio Plate 2 was sent to press.

The mystery of the Honeybee continues. □

## Quotable Quotes

We would disagree with one of their descriptions—that the 8.3¢ Transportation coil was re-engraved when shifted from the Cottrell to B Press operations—because they [the PNC Study Group] may have misread the product. They have a difference between the printings from the two presses but their illustration of an "A" showing cuts does not prove it. Actually what they are showing is simply part of a

cut relief, which may or may not be different from the relief or reliefs used in entering the Cottrell plates. But we've had hundreds of different cut reliefs, starting in the 1950s, and they do not involve the dies. True, they have never been thoroughly studied but that doesn't change their status.

George W. Brett  
Reviewing the *PNC Catalog*  
*United States Specialist*

## BEP Plate activity report, Jan. 1 to April 30, 1989

CAT	PLATE	ASSIGNED	TO PRESS	CANCELED	IMPRESS.	SUBJ.	Max. PNCs	NOTES
25F9	181664-9	01/19/89				480		
3TR1	178807-1	09/08/87	11/09/87	1/30/89	528,000	468	4,752,000	
3TR1			09/29/87			468		Earlier date to press than previously reported
5.3T1P	180652-1		03/05/89			468		3rd date to press
7.1T1Pii	182560-1	04/14/89				468		
7.6T2P	181197-2		01/31/89			468		3rd date to press
7.6T2P			02/24/89			468		4th date to press
7.6T2P			03/09/89			468		5th date to press
7.6T2P			APR 89			468		6th date to press
7.6T3P	182478-3	04/03/89				468		<b>CARRERA, NEW PLATE NUMBER</b>
8.4T1P	180445-1		03/01/89			468		3rd date to press
10.1T3Pii	181104-3		01/03/89			468		3rd date to press
10.1T3Pii			03/13/89			468		4th date to press
13.2T1P	180403-1		02/07/89			468		5th date to press
15T2	182634-2	04/21/89				468		Assigned date; B Press
16.7T1P	180276-1		02/27/89			468		4th date to press
16.7T1P			03/26/89			468		5th date to press
16.7T1P			04/01/89			468		6th date to press
20T2R	181150-2		04/05/89			432		2nd time to press
20.5T1P	180748-1		04/05/89			468		4th date to press
25M4	182479-4	04/04/89				480		<b>HONEYBEE, NEW PLATE NUMBER</b>
7U1	181691-1	01/24/89				432		F stamps magenta, Andreotti Press
7U1	181692-1	01/24/89				432		F stamps cyan, Andreotti Press
7U1	181693-1	01/25/89				432		F stamps yellow, Andreotti Press
7U1	181694-1	01/25/89				432		F stamps black combo, Andreotti Press
7U1	181144-1	10/26/88	11/18/88	1/17/89	9,300	432		F stamps Yellow, Andreotti Press
7U1	181145-1	10/26/88	11/18/88	1/17/89	9,300	432		F stamps black combo, Andreotti Press

## Honeybees sport new screened tagging

By Alan Thomson

I have found a new type of tagging on Plate 2 of the 25¢ Honeybee printed on the D Press. All my copies have a seam line at 2L.

This tagging has rectangular corners and the edges look like they have tiny perforation-like indentations.

The existence of the square corners will necessitate a change in the description under 25M2 on Page 44 of the catalog.

[Editor's note: Thomson immediately informed Don Eastman, president of the PNC Collectors Club (PNC<sup>3</sup>); A.S. Cibulskas, chairman of the study group's variety committee, and Wayne Youngblood, the study group's expert on tagging.

[Cibulskas thinks the new tagging is not only a different shape (square corners), and is different in the way it is applied. He called it "dot-matrix"-like.

[Instead of a solid coating of taggant, resulting in an even appearance, this tagging appears to have a screen.

[A screen is most easily seen in half-tone photographs printed in non-offset newspapers. In half-tones, the image is made up of a series of dots of varying intensity.

**UNTAGGED ERRORS:** Breadwagon, Yosemite, others for trade or sale. Untagged coils on commercial covers on approval. Buying tag varieties. TAG SHIFT HARRY Mueggenburg, 3525 Bluff Court, Carmichael, GA 95608. (5-90)

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[On Thomson's Honeybees, the edges of the tagging show the screen effect most clearly. These are not "perforation-like" shapes, but merely the consistent pattern of screen dots. They can be seen only under some magnification.

[To clearly see what a screen effect looks like, please examine the edges of the screened block around the headline above this article. The stamps' tagging has a similar appearance at its edges.

[The warning must be made again that viewing stamps under short-wave UV is dangerous to the eyes. Glasses usually protect against harm, but when viewed up close, UV can get around the glasses. Therefore, it is not recommended that one do this without great care to keep UV that is not passing through glass from direct contact with the eye.] □

## BEP lists all current stamp papers

BEP has sent Richard Nazar a list of current stamp papers that could be used to print coil stamps.

For the Andreotti gravure press (Press 601): **Unphosphored:** LP-690 (18.5" wide); LP-58 (20"); LP-688 (20.5"); LP-59 (22.0"). **Phosphored:** LP-698 (18.5"); LP-716 (20"); LP-703 (20.5"); LP-717 (22"); LP-705 (23.0").

For the B (702), C (901), and D (902) intaglio presses: **Unphosphored:** LP-37 (18.5"); LP-40 (same, dry gum). **Phosphored:** LP-701 and LP-713 (18.5"); LP-715 (20.5"); LP-714 (22").

## Seam line report

By Kim Cuniberti and A. S. Cibulskas

The following seam line positions are known on Honeybees printed on the D Press (lines repeat at an interval of 24):

**Plate 1** (All have block tagging with rounded corners)—12L/R, 11L, 10L, 9L, 8L, 7R, 9R, 10R, 11R.

**Plate 2** (Block tagging with rounded corners)—12L/R(?), 11L, 10L, 9L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L(?), 3L, 2L, Zero(?), 1R, 2R, 3R, 6R, 7R, 8R, 10R, 11R.

**Plate 2** (Screened block tagging, square corners)—12L/R(?), 11L, 9L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L(?), 3L, 2L, Zero(?), 9R, 11R.

Items marked with a question mark are known to exist, but the type of tagging is not certain.

The only positions still unreported on Plate 2 are 4R and 5R. □

For the C and D intaglio presses: **Unphosphored:** LP-52 (20.5"); LP-53 (dry gum, 22.0"). **Phosphored:** LP-702 (20.5").

For the D intaglio and offset press: **Unphosphored:** LP-57 (18.5"); LP-689 (20.5"). **Phosphored:** LP-706 (18.5"); LP-707 (20.5").

BEP said all Flag stamps before the Yosemite were printed on LP-37, an uncoated paper with shiny resin-dextrin gum.

It is not yet known how Papers 701 and 713 differ from each other, possibly in the gum. Some of the stated widths may not even be suitable for coil stamps. □

## Why negative image of precancel may be seen in tagging of stamps

By Stephen G. Esrati

To answer a question raised by Edward Gould in the September issue of *TPN*, Ken Lawrence sent in a copy of an article by John Gulka, "'Phantom' Precancel or Gremlins in the Ink Well?" which appeared in the February 1983 issue of *The United States Specialist*.

Gould had asked for information about untagged lines on tagged stamps that fell at or near the position of precancel lines.

The stamps examined by Gulka were 4¢ Stagecoaches from Plates 1 and 2. The lines ran uniformly across a roll of 3,000. He asked BEP to determine the cause. This is what Gulka reported:

In its efforts to identify the source of the "lines," the BEP after several weeks, traced it to the ink well supplying the phosphor tagging ink to the rollers. The BEP finally concluded that apparently a batch of the phosphor mineral used in the tagging ink probably contained grains of the mineral which had not been ground down to the same micron mesh size as other material in the trough. When these grains reached the bottom of the ink trough at the point where the ink is transferred to the inking rollers, each particle created a dam which prevented any ink from passing through to the roller. This left the roller uninked at specific point, creating the untagged "lines." Because the ink is relatively invisible to the naked eye, the untagged lines were not noticed during the inspection of the stamps after printing.

I do not know enough about the printing technology of the Cottrell presses to say that BEP's fanciful answer to Gulka was wrong, but it seems just too fantastic to have these grains collect conveniently at just those points where precancel lines would have been printed.

There could be a much simpler answer.

On the Cottrell presses, stamp plates were made by cutting out the portions that were to be printed. This left the por-

tions to be printed lower than the surface of the plate.

Ink was applied to the entire plate by a roller. The plate was then wiped, so that only the low parts would continue to hold ink. The plate then passed across the portion of the dampened paper web that was to be printed. To ensure that the ink would be applied evenly, an impression roller pushed the paper up against the plate. The finished stamp has the ink above the paper surface.

Just the opposite happened with precancels. Precanceling was done by a flexographic mat on which the part to be printed was raised. That means ink was applied by an inking roller directly to the raised parts of the mat.

[Precancel mats were removed to print tagged stamps. A tagging mat replaced the precancel mat at that point. Presumably the black ink fountain used for precancels was filled with taggant (which should hardly be termed "ink").]

The same roller that applied ink to precancel mats would have applied taggant to the tagging mats used for unprecanceled stamps.

The simpler explanation of the ghostly precancel lines is that the raised surface of the precancel mat left a slight indentation on the inking roller, causing it not to pick up taggant at the worn points. Thus, the untagged portions would correspond in size and location to whatever precancel was printed on that press previously.

An interesting corollary may be found on some tagged 11¢ Caboose stamps that lack tagging in the shape of the 20¢ Flag. It is known that both these stamps were printed on the B Press and that the precancels on both stamps have no gaps because the precancel was printed from a seamless sleeve.

The difference here is that on the B Press the inking roller on the precancel portion of the mat was worn down by the design of the Flag stamp itself and transferred a negative image of that design in the form of an untagged area on the tagging of the Caboose.

H. Harry Mueggenburg, a specialist in tagging, said Gulka's technical explanation would only make sense if the phantom precancel lines appeared randomly.

"I have examples on several other issues, including the 20¢ Fire Pumper, that are very uniformly apart," Mueggenburg said. □

## Updates of PNC Catalog and of TPN

### New stamps

**7.6T3P**—Plate 3 of the 7.6¢ Carreta, date uncertain, on mail from Belleville, Ill.

**25F11**—Plate 11 of the Flag Over Yosemite, widely found in mid-August. On pretagged paper (Haake)

**25M1**—Plate 1 of the 25¢ Honeybee from the first production run. For full report see article starting on Page 95. (Koepp, Maves)

### TPN corrections

**Page 72**—Thom E. Wheeler notes that the maximum PNC figures given for the 25¢ "E" undenominated stamps are twice as high as they should be. For stamps with the plate numbers 1111, the total should be 100,958,800; for those with the plate numbers 1211, the total should be 21,866,000.

**Page 85**—Gerald Clark says he was misunderstood about a 25¢ Honeybee that has a whole plate number on top. The stamp was not miscut. The black was printing low, Bee as well as plate number.

**Page 91**—Clark's comments about the wrapper label on Plate 2 of the 15¢ Tugboat should have said the color of the ink, not the paper, was different.

### Imperforates

By Dr. John Greenwood

The following imperforates are now known on the 25¢ Flag Over Yosemite:

25F2, 25F3, 25F4, 25F5i and ii, 25F6ii, 25F7i and ii, 25F8i and ii, 25F9i and ii.

Plate 2 of the 20¢ Cable Car exists imperforate.

### Catalog updates

**Page 41**—The earliest known usage on 20T15 should read June 30, 1982. (Wheeler) □

**PAYING TOP PRICES** for PNCs on commercial cover, especially 18¢ Surrey #15, #16, #17, #18 and 18¢ Flag #6 and #7 and all precanceled PNC covers. Rob Washburn, P.O. Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976.

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# FDCs: Catalog should warn about abuses

Continued from Page 95

send in replacement covers bearing stamps with plate numbers that were issued later with a request that these be canceled with the USPS "First Day of Issue" cancel as replacements for the "damaged" ones.

All FDC servicing is a now travesty and has been for many years. At one point it was possible to do all of the canceling before the actual first day. USPS would actually hire people in the first-day-city-to-be, train them, and then have them do the canceling. What this meant was that the servicers, who prepared their own covers, could hire the trained personnel on the actual first day to do the servicers' work. However, all replacement covers were still handled by the post office. In those days, not as many covers were serviced, so the actual replacement quantity was very, very small.

I recommend that the next edition of the *Plate Number Coil Catalog* list all "FDCs" that have a plate number issued 60 days beyond the day of issue as in the

following example:

**20T8**

☐ EFO \$10.00

This would define the actual plate number and list it for what it is and still credit the servicer with a little ingenuity, and even allow him a profit on his investment. If the "sponsors" wish to pay larger sums for these contrived oddities, they can do so with the knowledge that they will not make a profit.

A very similar situation exists with pre-FDCs. The American First Day Cover Society has refused to list these as other than oddities and they will not bring high prices when offered. The use of commemoratives prior to their official date of issue is an ongoing thing. There are always postal clerks who will sell the stamps before the date that is stated on the shipment, either because they need the stamps to supply customer demand for postage or through willful disregard of official instructions.

I have an envelope with the Letter Carriers stamp with a machine cancel dated 26 AUG 1989. This was mailed from a

large office, as my address is bar coded at the bottom. The stamps were obtained elsewhere by the mailer of the envelope. USPS lists Aug. 30 as the day of issue at a carriers' convention in Milwaukee.

I believe the early sale of a stamp and FDOI cancellation of a stamp issued long after the day of issue should be in the same category—an oddity. Both fall through the cracks. ☐

*Editor's note:* Godin, a member of the PNC Study Group, is editor of the *Durand Standard Plate Number Catalog* and is executive secretary of the Bureau Issues Association.

**ALL BACK ISSUES** of TPN available. Please send SASE for order blank. Steve Esrati, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

**5.5¢ weak "Burned Rubber" variety** on tagged 5.5¢ Artmaster FDC, number cut, \$7.50; Honeybee untagged, and uncanceled on cover, no number, \$10. Steve Esrati, P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

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	from 1981	38	—	53 PNC/2 SF US\$ 94.00
Part I: COTTRELL press/joint line/reg. overall tagged Part II: Other presses/no joint line/reg. block tagged	1981/85	13	53 CS/I	53 CS/I SF US\$ 36.50
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# FDCs: How FDC collectors collect them

Continued from Page 95

collector dissatisfaction with the multiplicity of plate numbers found on issues of the late 1960s and 1970s.

The new system replaced the actual plate number with a single color-coded digit allowing numbers to be bunched in the traditional block of four. At the same time, USPS announced that coil stamps, as well as booklet panes, would be included in the new policy. On coil stamps, the number is printed at the bottom of the stamps.

While most PNC collectors have concentrated on mint stamps, a small number have delved into First Day Covers. I have collected FDCs since 1961 and have been a member of the American First Day Cover Society since 1968. My FDC collection has progressed from a general worldwide interest to, currently, three selected issues other than PNCs.

The comments that follow are written from the point of view of an FDC collector, rather than of a PNC collector.

As in other philatelic specialties, FDCs have a set of rules and conditions unique unto themselves. If your PNC FDC collection is only a hobby, the following may be of no use to you. However, it is my belief that most collectors hope for future return on their investments. To sell your collection to an FDC dealer, use the following guidelines to increase your potential resale value.

These comments, incidentally, are apropos to all modern FDCs, i.e., those produced after 1941.

## Condition

- 1) The cover should be clean and uncrinkled.
- 2) By tradition, the cover should be unaddressed. Indeed, to many FDC collectors, the more likely that the cover actually passed through the mail, the less collectible it is.

3) The cover should have a cachet (pronounced ca-SHAY). This is a printed design on the envelope. The design should be related to the stamp. Although usually printed only at the left side of the envelope (Fig. 1), in the last few years some cachet makers have tended to produce complete, overall designs (Fig. 2).

## Cancel style

1) The "FIRST DAY OF ISSUE" (FDOI) cancellation should be strong and legible. It should not be off center and should touch the stamp. Figure 3 is an example of an exception to this rule.

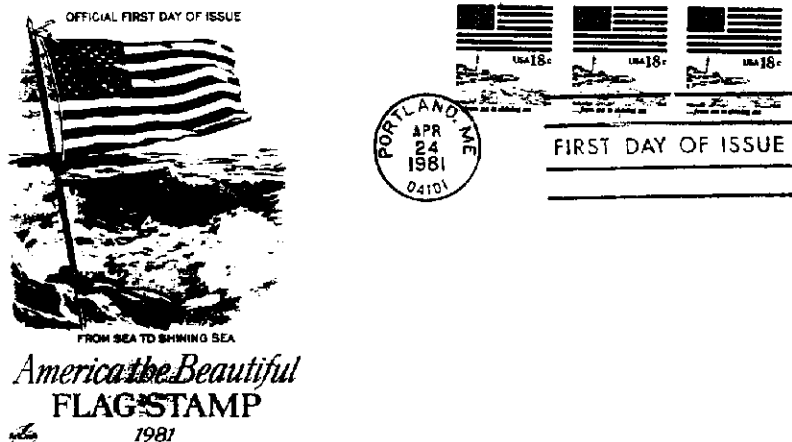


Figure 1: Cachets are usually only at the left.

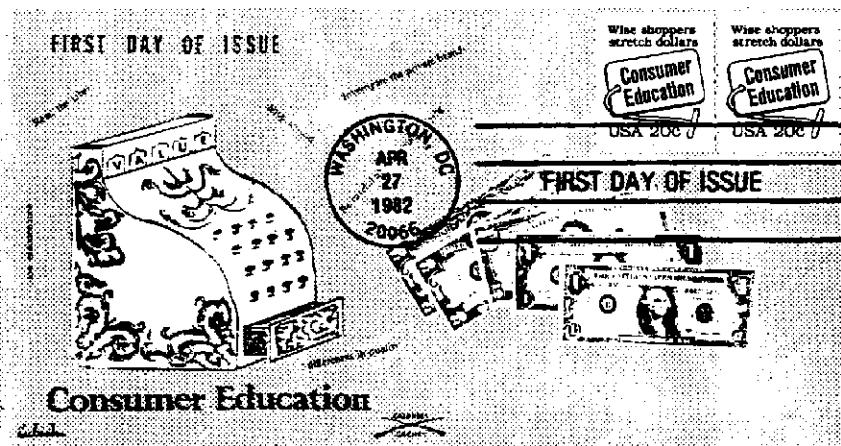


Figure 2: In exceptional cases, cachets cover the entire envelope.

Usually Plate 3 of the 20¢ Flag is found only with the bottom part of the dial (the circular date part of the cancel) very weak.

2) The FDOI cancellation can be applied either by machine or by a hand-stamp. Although some PNC FDC dealers have different prices for machine cancels (Fig. 4) and hand cancels (Fig. 5), in the FDC world there is usually no difference in price. FDC dealers usually do not stock according to machine/hand cancel.

3) PNC collectors prefer that the plate number be untouched by the FDOI cancel. At present, however, there is no consensus among FDC collectors about this aspect.

## The stamps

1) The stamps should be well centered and perfect in all respects. They should

be placed evenly on the cover.

2) If possible, there should be at least a strip of three with the number on the center stamp. For the earlier issues of PNCs, this is very difficult. Most FDC servicers followed the older tradition that coils be collected in pairs with the joint line at the center. Such early issues, with strips of three or five, command a premium (Fig. 1).

My comments are from the viewpoint of the FDC collector. I welcome correspondence from those who might have additional comments at P.O. Box 451, Westport, N.Y. 12993-0451. □

*Editor's note:* Estus is a member of the PNC Study Group and AFDCS. He is also active in Olympic philately.

**If label says "6-89," It's time to renew!**



# USPS toughens rules on FDCs

*Continued from Page 95*

The abuses were reported by the PNC Study Group's Wayne L. Youngblood in the Sept. 11 issue of *Linn's*. Youngblood's example was a cover bearing Plate 10 of the 25¢ Flag Over Yosemite, which was printed in mid-July, but bearing a "first-day" cancel of Feb. 14. The stamp could legitimately be submitted for first-day service for 60 days after the first day because USPS extended the usual grace period to 60 days.

According to Youngblood, several commercial firms that service FDCs applied for an extension of the grace period and serviced covers with Plate 9 well after the original grace period had expired.

Youngblood, who had heard reports of abuses concerning Plates 3 and 4 of the block-tagged 25¢ Flag; Plate 2 of the 8.4¢ Ambulance; Plate 2 of the 20¢ Cable Car, and Plate 2 of the 21¢ Railroad Mail Car, asked USPS to replace some damaged 25¢ Yosemite covers and affixed strips from Plate 10, which appeared five months after the stamps were issued. At the time of issue, they bore only numbers from Plate 8.

His replacement covers arrived in perfect condition on Aug. 28 with the Feb. 14 cancel.

An even earlier report on FDCs bearing Plate 10 of the 25¢ Flag appeared in *The Point*, the house organ of Ed Denson, also a member of the PNC Study Group. Denson's report was dated July 20 and was reported here in the September issue, which went to press Aug. 15.

The Postal Service reacted quickly to Youngblood's Sept. 11 report. In the next issue of *Linn's* Youngblood was able to report the new rules under which you get exactly what you trade in: "If your damaged first-day cover has a stamp with a No. 2, you will receive an FDC with a No. 2. If the stamp has no number, you will receive one with no number," Youngblood quoted Bob Brown, manager of the Philatelic Sales Division, as saying.

Brown told Youngblood that once he had been alerted to the abuses Brown checked 25¢ Flag covers submitted to USPS for replacement and found several bearing higher numbers than were available during the grace period. □

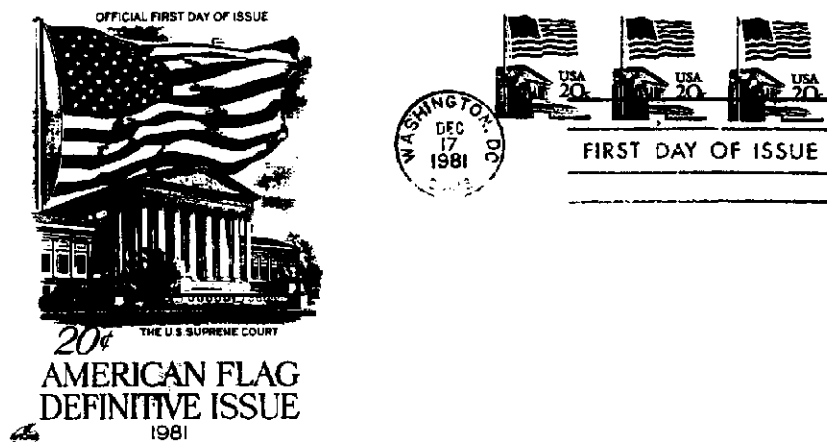


Figure 3: On Plate 3 of the 20¢ Flag, the dial bottom is usually weak.

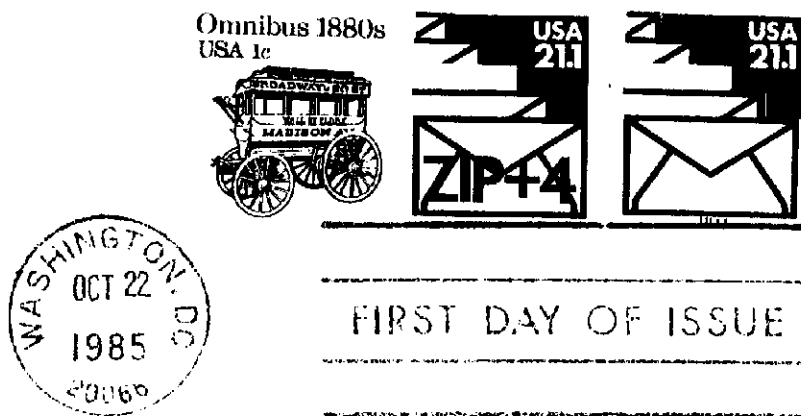


Figure 4: A machine cancel. Note the smaller diameter of the dial.

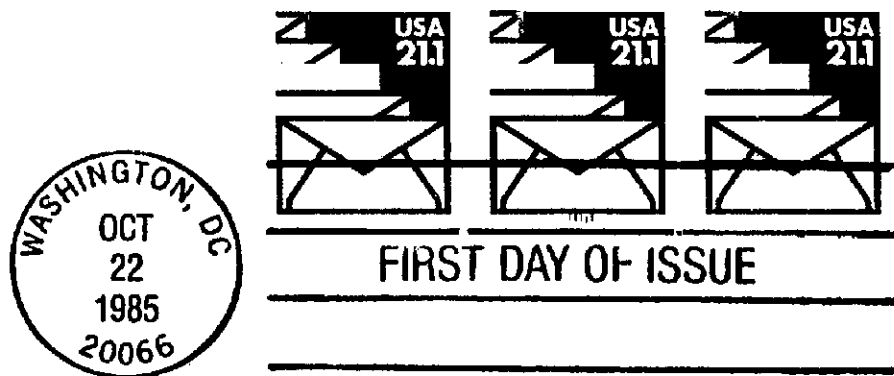


Figure 5: A hand cancel. Note the larger diameter of the dial.

## Haake becomes a full-time PNC dealer

Al Haake, who has managed to be both a teacher and a stamp dealer for several years, has given up teaching.

Haake, a member of the PNC Study Group, had considered making the switch several years ago, but decided against it because he did not wish to lose his retirement benefits as a teacher. He did drop some of his extracurricular coaching tasks to have more time for his stamp business.

The full break came when school started this year.

\*\*\*

After years of ads for PNCs graded "F-VF," Dr. Robert Rabinowitz did something new in his *Linn's* ad in the issue of Oct. 2.

In that ad he offered PNCs as "VF-XF" with 20% off for "F-VF."

The prices in the ad are almost the same as those for "VF-XF" in Dr. Rabinowitz' August price list. One item that climbed was a strip of five of Plate 4 of the 20¢ Flag, which rose from \$315 to \$365.

\*\*\*

Also changing their basic policy are Jerry and Barb Koepp, owners of Stamps 'n' Stuff in West Des Moines, Iowa. Their ad in the same edition of *Linn's* priced stamps in strips of three and five for "F," "VF-XF" and "XF-S."

The Koepps had experimented with ads showing pricing for one grade at a time in the past, going from "F-VF" to "VF-XF" and back. On the latter switch, however, there was an impression among collectors who keep track of dealers' prices that the Koepps had raised their prices (in fact, the second set of "F-VF" was mostly slightly lower than before).

While many of the Koepps' "VF-XF" prices in the latest ad were actually lower than their previous prices for "F-VF," a few items did climb, notably Plates 5 and 6 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon, which hit \$210 for PS/3 and \$215 for PS/5. Other scarce strips, such as Plates 3, 4 and 7 of the 18¢ Surrey also climbed a bit. But Plates 5 and 6 of the 5.9¢ Bicycle fell to \$62 for a strip of five from \$85.

\*\*\*

Michael M. Karen lowered his "F-VF" price for a strip of five of Plates 5 and 6 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon from \$240 in April to \$165 in September.

Karen, in fact, lowered prices on almost all of the expensive PNCs and left

### All the news of PNCs that fits we print

the rest at their April prices.

Taking a drop of almost \$200 was a strip of five of Plate 3 of the 20¢ Flag, now priced at \$650.

One Karen item that climbed (as it has in most recent price lists) was the pre-canceled 20¢ Flag, which Karen offers at \$10 for a strip of five. Other dealers price this item at \$20 (Haake for XF); \$12 (Dr. Rabinowitz for "VF-XF"); \$21 (Koepp, for "VF/XF"), and \$13.25 (M&M/Southwest for "VF-XF."

\*\*\*

25¢ Honeybees with the black offset color ("25 USA") missing sold for \$200 to \$230 a pair in a September auction held by Wallace Stamp & Coin Co. in Fort Worth, Tex. Helen Wallace said she and her husband sold some pairs at retail for \$250.

The offset-missing variety was also reported by *Linn's* to have been found by James Williamson of Tennessee, whose secretary had bought a roll and "found something different."

Williamson sold his stamps to Karen, who also had no-intaglio (Bee missing) varieties, thus giving Karen the ability to sell two distinctive black-missing varieties.

\*\*\*

The "O" in "1920s" on the 8.5¢ Tow Truck is really a capital "O" and not a zero. A reader of *Linn's* had noticed this and mentioned it to John M. Hotchner, who writes the "U.S. Notes" column.

Hotchner got word from an anonymous graphic artist, who worked on the stamp that the *Linn's* reader was right. The artist also revealed that he designed the plus sign for the 17.5¢ Racing Car because the typeface used on the stamp had none.

\*\*\*

M&M/Southwest is offering untagged 25¢ Flag Over Yosemite stamps from Plate 8 at \$99 for a strip of five. No-number pairs are \$7.95.

\*\*\*

Whenever someone asks a PNC question in *Stamp Collector's* "You Asked" column, he seems to get a wrong answer. When a Georgia reader bought a strip of 53 of the 4¢ Stagecoach he found plate numbers 3 and 4 on it. The

answer he got, in full, was as follows:

The rotary presses used at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing pair two printing plates together on the printing cylinder. (WRONG. Not any more.)

The 4¢ Stagecoach coil is produced on the B Press (WRONG. This was a Cottrell printing.). Each plate is 52 stamps wide (WRONG. On the B Press it is 18 rows wide, 52 stamps around.), so one full revolution of the cylinder will produce a row of stamps 104 subjects long (WRONG.).

The differing numbers come about because of two different plates being paired together, since no two plates are given the same number. This is quite normal.

If anyone still needs to know, two plates measuring 18 rows of 24 stamps were paired on the Cottrells. On the B Press, all stamps have the same plate number since only one strip of 52 is printed.

\*\*\*

Wolfgang Schön, a member of the PNC Study Group, gave Steve and Nina Esrati a guided tour of the Lighthouse Album factory near Hamburg during their Germany trip.

The highly automated plant required the manufacture of special machinery to make and print hingeless albums. Schön said, however, that it is uneconomical to automate the manufacture of albums that are printed in small editions. To make those, Lighthouse sends printed pages to people who work at home and they apply the mounts by hand.

In Germany, such homework is covered by the collective-bargaining agreements with the printers' union, and the home-workers get all benefits such as the German equivalent of Social Security.

Alas, Lighthouse's PNC albums are among those that cannot be automated.

\*\*\*

It's a lot easier—and cheaper—to buy a numbered coil stamp from a post office automat in Germany since the numbers appear on the gum side of every fifth stamp. But since the coils are usually collected as strips of five with the number on the back of an end strip, one may need to buy nine stamps to get a collectible strip.

It is, therefore, more economical to buy the strips at the counter. Most post offices have a display on the wall showing every stamp they have in stock at their philatelic window and almost all post offices have such a window. □

# PNC VARIETIES

No.	Face	Plate #	Description	Size	Price	No.	Face	Plate #	Description	Size	Price
2	1¢	#4	Chip 1L bottom between 2d & 4th perf.	PS5	4.00	84	17¢	#5	Auto. Reclining comma 1R	PS5	8.00
3	1¢	#4	Chip 1L between 4th & 6th perf.	PS2	3.00	85	17¢	#6	Auto. Dot above E 1R (mint)	PS5	30.00
4	1¢	#6	Crack 1R	PS5	6.00	88	17¢	#7	Auto. Chip on joint Line 1R	PS5	10.00
5	2¢	#3	Tail on "1" 1L	PS3	10.00				same	PS5	12.50
5A	2¢	#3	same	PS3	8.50	88A	17¢	#7	Auto. Dot above B (P/C) Type A	PS5	12.50
6	2¢	#3	Smoking "1" 1L	PS2	5.00	90	17¢	#2	Mint LOM Dot/Dot Line 1L/1R	PS3	5.00
			same	PS3	7.50	91	17¢	#2	Mint LOM Line (bottom) 1R-2R	PS5	5.00
			same	PS5	15.00	92	17¢	#3	Mint LOM Dot/Dot Line 1L/1R	PS5	5.00
8	3.4¢	#1,2	Chill-Roller Doubling	PS5	15.00	94	17¢	#4	Mint LOM Dot 1L/1R	PS5	5.00
8A	3.4¢	#1,2	Chill-Roller Doubling	PS3	10.00	95	17¢	#6	Mint LOM Dot 1L/1R	PS5	5.00
9	3.4¢	#1,2	(Gap 1R) Thin double bar break on top P/C bar	PS6	3.00	96	18¢	#5	Flag Seashell 1L	PS5	10.00
10	3.4¢	#1,2	(Gap 2R) Missing Period after "Org." Mat Variety 1R of gap.	PS6	3.00	97	18¢	#1	Surrey. Lightning Bolt 1L	PS2	95.00
11	3.4¢	#1,2	(Gap 1R) Missing Period Mat. Variety 2R of gap	PS6	3.00				same	PS3	110.00
12	3.4¢	No #	Missing Period Mat Variety on Stamp 2 & 4	Strip 5	1.00				same	PS5	125.00
13	3.4¢	No #	Missing Period Mat Variety on Stamp 1R of gap	Gap Strip 5	1.00	99	18¢	#9	Surrey. Lightning Bolt 1L	PS2	18.00
14	4¢	#1	Multiple Slashes 1R	PS2	4.00				same	PS3	18.00
			same	PS3	5.00	101	18¢	#1112	Monument. Color shift	PS5	12.50
			same	PS5	8.50	103	20¢	#2	Pumper. Flats Crack 1 L.	PS2	100.00
15	4¢	#2	Multiple Slashes 2L & 1L	PS3	6.00				same	PS3	300.00
16	4¢	#2	Quotation Marks 1L	PS2	4.00	104	20¢	#16	Pumper. Chill Roller	PS5	12.50
17	4¢	#2	LOM dots 2 at 1L 1 at 1R	PS3	5.00	105	20¢	#1	Pumper. LOM Dot 1L	PS5	160.00
			same	PS5	7.50	106	20¢	#4	Pumper. LOM Dot & Line 1L	PS5	6.50
18	4¢	#1B	B Press. Inking Variety Falling Luggage Variable	Strip 5	2.00	107	20¢	#7	Pumper. LOM Dot 1L	PS5	70.00
20			same. Doctor Blade Under Tire	Strip 5	1.50	108	20¢	#9	Pumper. LOM Dot & Line 1L	PS5	6.00
21			same. Doctor Blade Over Coach	Strip 5	1.50				same	PS3	5.00
22	4.9¢	#1,2	Mat variety, double spike in road 1L of gap	Strip 5	4.00				same	PS2	4.00
23	4.9¢	#1,2	Mat variety, single spike in road 1L of gap	Strip 5	4.00	109	20¢	#10	Pumper. LOM Dot & Line 1L	PS5	6.00
24	4.9¢	#2	Gap 2R. Double bar break — both bars	PS6	4.00				same	PS2	4.00
25	4.9¢	#4	Buggy Whip (mint) short	PS3	12.50				same	PS3	5.00
26	4.9¢	#4	Buggy Whip (mint) long	PS5	12.50	110	20¢	#13	Pumper. LOM Dot 1L	PS5	6.00
27	4.9¢	#4	Buggy Whip (P/C) LG	PS7	16.50				same	PS3	5.00
28	4.9¢	#3,4	P/C mat variety Flying Dirt Clod 2R of gap	PS5	3.50	111	20¢	#15	Pumper. LOM Dot 1L	PS5	6.00
29	4.9¢	#5	Down Rain Crack 1L (Gap 2L)	PS5	20.00	112	20¢	#9	Pumper. Horse #9 1L	PS5	15.00
29A	4.9¢	#6	Buggy Whip (Gap 2L)	PS5	25.00	113	20¢	#14	Flag. Q line 1L	PS5	15.00
29B	4.9¢	#5,6	Line gap. Double bar break, top bar	PS5	6.00	113A	20¢	#14	Flag. Q line 1L (P/C)	PS5	20.00
30	5¢	#2	Fender Crack 1L	PS5	12.50	114	21.1¢	#11121	Diagonal scratch (mint)	PS5	15.00
31	5.2¢	#1	Dot over "k," dot over "g," 1L, 1R	PS3	30.00				same. Extension down (mint)	PS5	15.00
32	5.2¢	#2	Dot over "i" in Nonperfit	PS5	22.50				same. Diagonal scratch top 2L to bottom 1R	PS7	15.00
33	5.5¢	#1	Burned Rubber 2R (mint)	PS5	8.00				same. Extension up	PS7	15.00
34	6¢	#1	Skid Mark (mint) 2L	PS5	5.00				same. Extension Down 1st	PS5	15.00
35	6¢	#1	Ink Blobs (P/C) 3L	PS5	7.00				same. Extension down 2nd	PS9	15.00
36	6¢	#1	Flying dirt clod (P/C) 3L	PS5	7.50	115	21.1¢	#11121	(Mint) LOM dot 1L	—	8.50
37	7.1¢	P/C	Dash under 1 of 1920's 1L	PS5	5.00	116	21.1¢	#11121	(P/C) LOM Dot 1L	—	8.50
38	7.1¢	P/C	Dot over 9 in 1920's 1L	PS5	5.00	117	22¢	#2	Flag. Dot over Capitol 3L	PS5	8.00
39	7.1¢	P/C	"7:1" 12R	Strip 5	3.50	118	22¢	#8	Flag. Decapitated 8	PS5	8.00
40	7.1¢	P/C	Rock under rear wheel 13	Strip 5	4.00	119	22¢	#7	Moon in flag inking variety	Strip 3	15.00
41	8.3¢	#1	Whole low shifted #1 (mint)	PS5	35.00	120	22¢	#11	Flag. Cloudy #11 1L	PS5	10.00
42	8.3¢	#1	Parula shifted #1 on top Whole normal	PS5	5.00	120A	22¢	#9	Flag. Blue number	PS5	25.00
43A	8.3¢	#1	# bottom 1L (mint)	PS3	4.00	120B	22¢	#18	Flag. Blue number	PS5	25.00
44	8.3¢	#3 & 4	Mat variety smoking 8 1L of gap	PS5	7.50	120C	22¢	#20	Flag. Blue number	PS5	25.00
45	8.3¢	#3	P/C (Gap 1R) Inking varieties in and around "b" of Ambulance	PS6	9.00	120D	22¢	#22	Flag. Blue number	PS5	25.00
46	8.5¢	#1	Crack dot (P/C) 1L	PS5	7.50	121	E	#1222	Red scratch 1/2 of Din Domestic 1L	PS5	10.00
46A	8.5¢	#1	Slashed tie 15L	Strip 5	15.00	122	25¢	#1	Bee. Ball set on #1	PS5	15.00
46B	8.5¢	#1	Dot in 6 of 8.5	PS5	7.50	123	25¢	#1	Bee. Hidden number and mottled yellow	PS5	75.00
47	8.5¢	#1	P/C Chain Dot/Rock on Road 1L/2R	PS5	7.50	123A	25¢	#1	Bee. High bee, mottled yellow	Strip 5	10.00
48	8.5¢	#1	P/C Dot above roof 1R	PS5	7.50	125	8¢	#2	Bee. Joint lines	Strip 6	1.00
49	8.5¢	#1	P/C Dot in 8 of 8.5 1L	PS5	7.50	126	25¢	#2	Bread Wagon. Smoored number	PS5	12.50
50	8.5¢	#1	P/C Dot under rear tire 6L	Strip 5	3.50						
51	8.5¢	#1	P/C Dot on T/Dot in front of windshield 12R/13R	Strip 6	4.50	<b>Numbers on top</b>					
52	8.5¢	#1	P/C Rock in Road 24R	Strip 5	3.50	T1 1¢	#1		PS3	7.50	
53	8.5¢	#1	P/C Flying Bolt 13L	Strip 5	5.50	T2 1¢	#2		PS3	7.50	
54	8.5¢	#1	P/C Handle Dot 1L 21R	Strip 5	7.50	T3 1¢	#3 or #6		PS3	9.00	
55	8.5¢	#1	P/C Falling Chain Link	Strip 5	5.50	T4 4.9¢	#1	P/C Double bar break on top bar 2R	PS6	18.00	
56	8.5¢	#1	P/C Rock under Truck	Strip 5	5.50	T5 4.9¢	#2	P/C Double bar break on top bar 2R	PS6	18.00	
57	8.5¢	#2	P/C Circle before N 3R	Strip 5	4.00	T6 1.5¢	#1		PS5	7.50	
58	9.3¢	#1	Weeping W (mint) 1L	PS3	20.00	T7 17¢	#1		PS5	20.00	
59	9.3¢	#1	Weeping W (P/C) 1L	PS5	25.00	T8 17¢	#2		PS5	20.00	
60	9.3¢	#2	Tail on U (mint) 1R	PS2	14.50	T9 17¢	#3		PS2	3.00	
61	9.3¢	#3	Smoking "g" P/C LG 1L	PS5	45.00	T10 17¢	#4		PS2	3.00	
62	10.1¢	#1	Flying Hyphen (mint) 1R	PS5	10.00	T11 17¢	#5		PS3	4.00	
			same	PS3	7.50	T12 17¢	#4		PS5	4.00	
63	10.1¢	#1	Waving W	PS5	10.00	T13 17¢	#3	P/C Type A	PS3	7.50	
64	10.1¢	#1	Bursting Shell (mint) 29R	Strip 5	6.50						
65	10.1¢	#1	Tail on 0 of 10.1 (mint) 25L	Strip 5	6.50						
66	10.1¢	#1	Small dot right of A in USA	Strip 5	2.00						
66A	10.1¢	#1	Artillery Shell II 12L	Strip 5	18.00						
67	10.1¢	#7	P/C "Raindrop"	Strip 5	5.00						
68	10.1¢	#7	P/C Flying comma	Strip 5	5.00						
69	10.1¢	#2	Dot in "0" of 10.1 17R	Strip 5	6.50						
70	10.9¢	#2	Dropped Transfer	PS5	75.00						
71	11¢	#1	Caboote Brake Shoe (mint)	Strip 5	12.50						
72	11¢	#1	Caboote Brake Shoe (P/C)	Strip 5	12.50						
73	11¢	#1	Caboote Paw Print (mint) 21L	Strip 5	15.00						
74	11¢	#3	Suitz Fender Crack 1L	PS5	12.50						
			same	PS3	8.00						
75	11¢	#3	Suitz Fender & # Crack 1L	PS5	12.50						
76	11¢	#3	Suitz Chill Roller 1L	PS5	12.50						
77	11¢	#3	Suitz Polishing Cloth 1L	PS5	12.50						
78	11¢	#3	Suitz Zig Zag on hood 2R	PS5	12.50						
79	12.5¢	#1	P/C Falling Nail 2R	PS5	7.50						
79A	13¢	#1	Dot under rear wheel 1L	PS5	5.00						
81	16.7¢	#1	Dot over 9/Dot under 2 1L/3L	PS5	12.00						
82	16.7¢	#1	Dot above and between 0 & 2 26R	Strip 5	15.00						
82A	16.7¢	#1	Slash between tires 12L	Strip 2	12.00						
			same	PS5	7.50						
82B	16.7¢	#1	Dash below rear tire 2L	PS5	7.50						
82C	16.7¢	#1	Dash (cont.) 2L	PS5	7.50						
83	17¢	#1	Auto. Axle Break 1L	PS3	50.00						
			same	PS5	75.00						

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# Paper types:

*Views on Richard Nazar's research win support, but also draw added criticism*

## Anti: Ken Lawrence

Richard Nazar is privileged to believe that I have made no contributions to PNC philately and it is time to start, but he is not entitled to twist my words to his benefit.

I have not demanded that he divulge confidential sources as he claims. In two telephone conversations, both calls from him, he has refused to reveal his evidence, which is what makes his reporting unethical. No journalist is permitted to make unattributed claims that have a serious effect on readers. If there do exist physical characteristics that differentiate collectable types, he must state clearly what they are. If they arise because of different manufacturing processes, that is good to know.

But Nazar reasons backwards. He thinks because paper A was supplied by manufacturer X and paper B by Y, there must be a difference, and seeks to divine one. When somebody else discovers the traits he identifies on a stamp supplied by someone else, he denies it and explains it away.

Worst of all, as I showed in my *Linn's* column, he rejects real collectable differences (dead vs. high-brite papers) on papers he believes have a common origin.

Sure people can duplicate Nazar's work and report it more competently. That is not the point. The point is, he must report it so that individual assertions can be confirmed or refuted independently.

The scandal of the bluish papers is well known. The conspirators were the third assistant postmaster general, Arthur Travers, and a Philadelphia collector named Joseph Steinmetz. [*Editor's note:* In the old Post Office Department, the third assistant postmaster general was the man in charge of stamps. Travers was actually a clerk to and, later, acting third assistant postmaster general.]

Both were indicted and Travers was sacked. Steinmetz was tried, convicted, and sentenced, but never served time. Travers was never brought to trial, but died in disgrace.

The lesson to Nazar should be: You can't learn everything about early 20th-Century U.S. stamps from Max G. Johl.

The lesson for the rest of us is: We can't learn everything about coil stamp papers from Richard Nazar.

## Pro: D. John Shultz

I support the views of Richard Nazar and Kim Cuniberti that paper types are a valid area of collecting. They may be esoteric, but so what?

They are identifiable; they are a challenge to collect, and I enjoy the quest. Those who are not interested can ignore them. No one gets hurt.

I collect mint and don't care if the gum is gone once the stamps are used!

## Pro: Kim Cuniberti

I have been watching the controversy about paper types as viewed by Richard Nazar and Ken Lawrence. As the only dealer to stock and price paper types, I have more than a passing interest in this debate, and knowing both men personally, it is difficult to watch in silence.

I will state clearly that I am a biased observer. I have been an avid collector, searcher, and investigator of paper types since getting to know Rich some two years ago. I speak with him frequently, and more than anyone else I have had the opportunity (and privilege) to keep abreast of and occasionally assist in the research of this dedicated philatelic investigator. I do not speak as often with Ken, but I also know him to be a dedicated philatelic investigator.

Seeing these two important contributors to our PNC arena lock horns over what I believe to be misunderstandings is especially difficult.

I see the crux of the misunderstandings centering around Ken's frustrations with not having the tools to identify paper types on cover or used. This is principally because this need was not known to Rich or me until this summer. I have not one customer who has inquired about paper types on used. I believe, however, that this certainly is a valid request from a strong area of collecting, and I think the means of identification will be forthcoming. However, if this is left up to only Rich and me, it will take time.

I think it is important not to underestimate the role of long-wave ultraviolet light. It was the tool that Rich first used in discovering paper types (on cover, interestingly enough), and it continues to make the distinctions. I think the key to making it most useful is to have previously identified examples for simultane-

ous comparison. As a mint stamp collector and dealer I've always had the luxury of gum texture as an additional identifying characteristic, and I, more than anyone else, am guilty of promoting this as a means of identification. It is more convenient than using UV, and, to date, it has also been accurate.

In Ken's "Plate Number Coils" column in the Aug. 21 edition of *Linn's* he showed two 4.9¢ Buckboard strips on paper supplied to BEP by Paper Corp. of the United States (Type I paper) that exhibited dramatically different UV reactions. This phenomenon had been known to Rich and me for quite some time (I also found it on the 3.4¢ School Bus, among others). Rich's inability to come up with an explanation of what Ken showed is principally due to PCUS' unwillingness to disseminate information.

Could it mean that PCUS supplied BEP with more than one paper? Yes.

Does this make UV any less effective in identifying paper types? No.

Even the dullest 4.9¢ or 3.4¢ example on what we classify as Type I paper is completely different from the "dead" UV reaction of Type II paper. Whether it turns out that any of the Cottrell strips that exhibit high-brite or low-brite reactions are different papers or different paper additives to the same paper has no impact on Type II or Type III papers. Each has its own "look"; we just have to accept Type I with a range of "looks" until evidence is found to explain why.

As far as Rich's research goes, I know he has difficulty getting PCUS to talk. I also know that he has been asked not to use names in some instances.

Above this, however, I know him to be persistent despite his disappointments and I wish I had the time to help. (I have had to reduce my stamp dealing to give more time to my work as an artist.)

I don't see in him anything other than a collector like all of us who stumbled onto a mystery and wanted to find the answer. In Rich's case, he has had to do the work for the most part on his own. Everything he has learned about being an investigator he has taught himself. The same goes for his reporting, and I think he would be the first to admit that he does not know all there is to know about being an investigative reporter.

Ken's complaints about Rich's methods may be valid, so I would suggest

that Ken show Rich where he is going wrong. I personally know nothing about reporting of research results. My strength in PNCs has been detective work in finding items and doing superficial analysis, and I might add to that some speculating on origins and causes, but I do not have to go to sources for what I do. I can just ramble on as I am now and Steve Esrati does me the honor of not only publishing my musings, but also calling me a contributing editor.

I think the bottom line of all this is that there are too few of us trying to answer too many questions. I think our strength in PNC collecting comes from our abilities to pull together in filling in the blanks. What needs to be done here is to get some assistance from the used PNC community on additional means of identifying paper types.

In the last month, Rich and I have been looking for and finding additional identifying characteristics which Rich will report when the work is complete. So much more territory could be covered with more helping hands. Recently, Bob Rabinowitz has offered to see what means may be available from chemistry.

Without "leaking" Rich's future report, one paper is already known to have a different chemical basis than the other two. The companies involved may all be meeting the BEP's specifications for LP-40 or LP-53 paper, but each is doing it with different processes and products. Time is the only thing standing between what we know now and what we'll all need to make paper identification an exact science. So where are the volunteers?

One final piece of business I'd like to clear up is Ken's reference to Rich being guilty of raising the adrenaline by evoking rare paper types. I think I am clearly the guilty party here.

My last ad (which appeared this summer) compared the PNC paper types to the infamous blue paper issue. An unfair comparison? In retrospect, it probably was. I admit to not being versed about much more than the catalog values of the blue paper, but Ken has definitely enlightened me in that area.

As an artist, I was only trying for advertising creativity to drum up added interest. I can only say that my ad did little stirring up, probably because of the absurd comparison. Nonetheless, I have not seen Rich indulging in any such foolishness, so let's lay the blame where it belongs in that regard: to that crazy, creative ad copywriter of Contemporary Coils known as Kim Cuniberti.

## Pro: Gerald H. Clark

I really think that Rich Nazar is on the right track on paper types and Ken Lawrence should be patient until all the results are in.

## Reply: Richard J. Nazar

OK, *TPN* readers—it's time for you to reply with your comments, which hopefully will put an end to Ken Lawrence's broadsides.

I'm putting myself and my paper study on trial and you're the jury. All I ask is that you judge me fairly and examine the evidence—and, most importantly, that you look at your stamps.

My first published report on paper types, "Plate, paper, gum varieties found on coils," appeared in *Linn's* (Feb. 24, 1986) in William H. Hatton's regular column, "Basics & Beyond."

The portion of Hatton's column pertaining to me began:

Richard Nazar of Somerset, N.J., is no slouch when it comes to close study of the Transportation coils. He sent examples of plate varieties, paper types and even gum varieties.

Frankly, I'm impressed. I can hardly see the gum on these stamps, let alone discern distinct types.

After discussing the plate and precancel varieties that I reported, Hatton returned to my paper types discovery. His commentary was mixed with direct quotes from the manuscript I had sent to him, leading off with the differences between papers as seen under long-wave ultraviolet light. He continued:

Nazar's other discoveries can't be illustrated very well because they involve the paper and the gum.

Remember, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing now uses preprogrammed paper for these coils. Each paper type, therefore, is found with its own type of gum.

Hatton then recapitulated the differences between what we now term Type I paper and Type II paper, quoting from my manuscript and noting that some stamps off the Cottrell or the B press appeared on both papers, which I then called Cottrell paper and B Press paper. He said:

Remember, though Nazar calls the two papers Cottrell paper and B press paper, there is no proof that two different types were produced for each press.

It is possible that a new paper stock came into use about the time that most issues were being printed on the B press.

It may also turn out that while most Cottrell stamps are found on only one type of paper and most B press stamps are found on the other, that this is at least partly coincidence. With luck, time will answer most if not all the questions.

Hatton closed by saying:

This is the foundation for future listings in the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps*.

My research on paper types continued and, at the end of that year, I sent *Linn's* a second manuscript reporting the new information I had discovered. It included an up-to-date listing of the paper varieties found on different denominations of the Transportation Series.

*Linn's* published my article under my byline on Dec. 8, 1986, with photos of the gum textures of Papers I, II, and IIIa.

My article included the following:

Conversations with John Collins of the Research Division of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing have uncovered an explanation for the type I and type II papers.

Each is supplied to the Bureau by different paper manufacturers. An official letter to me, dated Sept. 12, 1986, from Bureau Executive Assistant Paul R. Frey states: "The variations in gum appearance reflect the different gum application equipment used by the different suppliers."

Type I paper is supplied by the Paper Corporation of America.

This company manufactures the paper and sends it to the Nashua/Davac Company, which applies the adhesive to the back of the paper. Nashua/Davac applies the gum in a fashion that produces the distinctive diagonal ridges.

Type II paper is supplied to the Bureau by Eastern Fine. This company applies the gum to its own paper stock using a roller which spreads the wet adhesive across the back of the paper in the direction of the run. This produces faint horizontal striations, a characteristic of type II paper....

In the official letter mentioned, the Bureau said it does not consider the papers used on the Cottrell press consistently and distinctly different from the papers used on the B press because "the papers used on both presses are purchased under the same specifications: P-PSDG-1 (April 27, 1979)."

Many questions remained, so I prepared a package of all the information I had been able to gather and sent it to BEP.

While I waited for a reply, I made contacts at the companies supplying stamp paper to BEP. Because of fierce competition between the companies to win BEP paper contracts, I was only able to derive small bits of information. Most of my important questions were answered with a simple "Proprietary!"

Nonetheless, pieces started coming together, resulting in my article in the July 1989 *TPN*. The headline said: "Now there are three dry-gum papers."

Ken's first assault on me and on my study hit in his *Linn's* column of Aug. 21, 1989. In it Ken cried about my inaccuracies and the improper classification

Please turn page

of the papers. He proclaimed: "The most characteristic difference among Nazar's three paper types are the texture, depth, and direction of the gum striations on the mint stamps."

This is not true! The fluorescent quality of the paper is the major characteristic!

Ken further confuses things with the article's accompanying photograph and the false caption below. The photograph showed two plate strips of the 4.9¢ Buckboard. The caption said: "Under long-wave ultraviolet illumination, the plate 6 strip of the precanceled 4.9¢ Buckboard stamp (top) is dead, while the plate 5 strip (bottom) glows bright with fluorescence. These strips are both classed as type I in Richard Nazar's system, because they have identical gum striations."

I found the caption interesting. It says the top strip is "dead." I had not heard of any 4.9¢ coils exhibiting this trait, so I called Ken to question him about the stamp. (This is the second telephone conversation he mentioned.)

I asked Ken if the stamp he showed in the photo was truly "dead" like Type II stamps. During our conversation he confirmed my speculation by admitting that there were small brightened fibers present in the stamp and that it was not truly "dead."

Was Ken purposely trying to confuse readers about paper type designations and their fluorescent characteristics?

Ken and I discussed the high-brite/low-brite/dead fluorescent qualities further. Ken said he even has a 17¢ Electric Auto precancel strip that is dead in long-wave UV. I suppose he was trying to provide me with a similar example to the one he showed in his article. I replied: "Congratulations! If it is really 'dead' then you have discovered a scarce paper type—Type II." I explained that if it was really dead, then it should be from plates 3 or 4, have smooth gum (a characteristic of Type II paper), and a precancel gap at 4L with a Type C precancel (the only gap position known to exist on the 17¢ Auto on Type II paper).

Once again, Ken confirmed my assumption and verified that the gum was indeed smooth, but although it was a Type C precancel, the gap could not be confirmed because the plate-number strip was only five stamps long.

Since Ken had openly rejected the valid collectability of paper type varieties, I tested him with the offer to swap a superbly centered strip of five of an identical plate number of 17¢ Electric Auto

precancel Type C (no gap) for the strip that we were discussing—the only difference being the paper and my improved centering.

Lawrence again confirmed my suspicion with his immediate decline of the trade. He explained that he would be foolish to trade because he knew of the high difference in value between the paper types.

In this issue of *TPN*, Ken writes: "Worst of all, as I showed in my *Linn's* column, [Nazar] rejects real collectable differences (dead vs. high-brite paper) on papers he believes have a common origin." This statement deserves attention for several reasons.

If Ken believes, as he implies in saying that "dead" and "high-bright" are real collectable differences, then he must undoubtedly agree in the collectability of the papers supplied to BEP by the different companies. After all, isn't the fluorescent quality of the stamp paper the major characteristic difference by which I identified the paper types? Of course it is, and it was that way from the start. The gum is merely an easily distinguishable characteristic that indicates the finisher, hence the supplier, of the paper without the aid of long-wave UV.

The September *TPN* contained Ken's first "poisoned" letter directed at me and my paper study. Steve Esrati allowed me to reply in the same issue.

You have just read Ken's second letter directed at me. He obviously chose not to camouflage his opinionated misunderstanding of the paper types. Instead, he questions my abilities.

So, am I confused, incompetent, unethical, a danger to stamp collectors? I certainly don't think so, and I don't see any evidence for such accusations!

Have I been personally attacked by Ken? You're damned right I have—and it's time for it to stop!

I apologize for this long reply, but I wanted you to read the truth—so that you could decide.

We've silently witnessed too many innocent people fall victim to Ken's personal attacks. I'm just his latest target—and it was unexpected.

There is a long and bloody trail from Ken's personal attacks. The verbal battles have been unproductive and detrimental to philately. I wish they would stop. We're wasting too much space, time, and energy rebutting accusations and unwarranted personal attacks.

Ken should end his witch hunts before they hurt more innocent people. Who's his next victim?

We should redirect our energies to the study of stamps—it's much more enjoyable.

## A letter to Rich Nazar from Ike S. Lee

(Used with permission)

The purpose of my study was to shoot down your paper types. I was trying to prove the inconsistency between UV reactions and gum textures to prove that paper types cannot be differentiated in used stamps after gum is washed off because these types are nothing but different gum textures as Ken Lawrence pointed out.

But what I found was that any paper types in given coils can be easily differentiated by UV quality alone. All three paper types have distinctly different UV qualities and gum textures. I find no inconsistency between UV qualities and gum textures so far. Yes, all three paper types can be differentiated in used stamps as well as in mint stamps.

I conducted some interesting experiments. I selected Type IIs and Type IIIs of 8.4¢ Wheel Chairs, 13.2¢ Coal Cars and 16.7¢ Popcorn Wagons to test. Type IIIs of these coils are virtually "dead" under UV like Type II papers. They have been one source of frustration. But Type III papers always show a trace of brightener, with slightly purplish color.

Then I chose my daughter (a high school senior who thinks stamps are nothing but pieces of paper and never understands why her dad and brothers are so crazy about them) to perform the test. First I showed her two different types under long-wave UV in the dark. She did not realize the differences at first, but after I pointed them out, she was able to distinguish them with no problem. Then I mixed five Type II Coal Cars with 35 Type III Coal Cars and asked her to separate them. I did not tell her how many Type IIs there were.

She did it without problem and found all five at the first shot. I confirmed that by gum texture. I set up the same test on the Wheel Chairs and Popcorn Wagons. Again, she had no problem separating them. Then I asked my son (who is only a second grader and is more interested in animal stamps than in "stupid" coils) to do a similar sorting. Even he was able to do so correctly.

This proves that paper type can be easily differentiated by UV quality alone. Then why all the confusion, skepticism, and frustration about paper types? I be-

lieve there are a few reasons.

First, descriptions of UV qualities of paper types are not specific and not scientific.

[Editor's note: This is exacerbated by the fact that Rich's black-and-white photos of the different UV reactions could not be reproduced adequately in the *PNC Catalog* or in *TPN*.]

Type IIs are described as brownish "dead" in appearance. This is vague and subjective. What do you [Rich Nazar] mean my "dead" appearance? Everybody has a different perception to colors. You are describing "feeling." It took me a long time to get the right feeling for UV characteristics.

But some Type I coils also show dull "dead" under UV, causing confusion. (These varieties are usually saturated with brightener showing dull purplish "dead" appearance under UV. To beginners, they can easily be confused as Type IIs. But the UV quality of Type II is distinctly different. I feel that these interesting varieties of Type I should be recognized as a sub-type of Type I.)

The best way to get the feel for UV qualities is by training your eyes with known Type IIs, such as those of the 1¢ Omnibus from Plates 5 and 6.

Some Type III paper shows a brownish, virtually "dead" appearance like Type II paper in UV. Some collectors actually abandoned using UV to differentiate paper types because of this. I was one of them. Then what's left? Gum textures!

Occasionally we have difficulty differentiating stamps by gum texture alone. Sometimes the gum alone does not give clear-cut information. I call it Type III but someone else calls it Type III and a third person says, "Geel! I'm not sure, I can call it either way."

But because all three papers have distinct UV qualities,

we shouldn't have this problem because we don't have to rely on gum. I am sure we will find some variations. Your report on experimental gum on Plates 13 and 14 of the 18¢ Surrey is an example.

I now believe paper types are real. Any collector should have no difficulty telling them apart, especially with practice. I'll take challenges from anyone in differentiat-

## LETTERS: What's all this about stopping the presses?

*Continued from Page 96*

Press Plate 1 was 18 rows wide and the D Press Plate 2 was 20 rows wide. We are checking on this.

Ken Lawrence strongly disagrees with the theory that all those plates were printed on the 18-row C Press. He believes that plates assigned as 20-row plates remained 20-row plates.

Lawrence believes that one of two things may have happened:

- BEP may have made typographical errors in reporting plate size.

- The stamps may well have been printed as 18-row product but off 20-row plates. This could happen by simply feeding in narrower paper.

We can only wait and see to get more of the picture.

### 20F14P on cover

Regarding the letter from John Galu asking if anyone has any commercial covers of the 20¢ Flag precancel, please be advised that I have such covers from the follow-

### Lighthouse special

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ing paper types by UV quality alone even without gum. Even with a 14¢ Iceboat, I could do so correctly after some practice.

I admit that my conclusion is based on reviewing my 5,000-plus PNC strips. I know this is a small number. But with two distinct characteristics (UV quality and gum texture), I don't think we can deny the existence of paper

types, especially when backed up by your in-depth research. I congratulate you for your hard work.

Certainly paper types add more fun to PNC collecting. I go to stamp shows with a UV lamp looking for uncommon types. It is really exciting to find something you have been looking for. After all, stamp collecting is a hobby to enjoy. □

ing mass mailers: Citizens for Reagan, Calhoun's Collector Society, and Citizens for Reagan in '84. I also have one on

piece from U.S. Rep. Don Sundquist, R-Tenn.

Rob Washburn

Skowhegan, Maine

## Quote

On issues with a variety of plate numbers ... collectors want every number possible on FDCs....

Many of these covers retail for hundreds and in some cases several thousand dollars each....

[A] "curve ball" associated with PNC FDCs is the fact that certain plate numbers exist on FDCs that first went to press many months after the first day passed. While some cover makers get extensions, these dates are long beyond any reasonable period. How could these have occurred?

... I believe their origin is ... simply explained... [T]he USPS will replace damaged FDCs. All a collector would have to do is mangle a legitimate PNC FDC, send it in to the FDC city or unit, include a cacheted envelope with the later plate number "to make it easy for the USPS to replace," and the likelihood is that you'll end up with a rarity!

I have a great deal of emotional involvement with almost all aspects of PNCs. But the possibility of creating FDC rarities via a variety of routes has made me very leery of these covers. Buyer beware.

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz

*The Stamper*

Sept./Oct. 1989

## Unquote

I've shunned first day covers; you know that. But I do have a couple. Thus Artcraft and Artmaster 20¢ Cable #2 PS/3s are \$60 each; House of Farnam are \$80. A few PS/5s are available at 50% more. Artcraft prephosphored 25¢ Flag #9 PS/3s with the corresponding block tag #9 PS/3 (same cover) are available at \$75. And finally, Artcraft prephosphored 25¢ Flag # singles 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 on the same Artcraft FDC is \$250.

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz

Price list

August 1, 1989

## Your views sought on 1990 catalog numbering ...

Response to Alan Thomson's suggestion that the "i" is redundant in assigning a PNC Catalog number to pretagged 25¢ Yosemite stamps has been heavily in favor of Thomson's views.

Like Thomson, A.S. Cibulskas is in favor of a single "i" for the pretagged stamps, with no suffix at all for the block tagged ones. The same view came from Thom E. Wheeler.

Both members of the PNC Study Group, however, insisted that the "R" be kept for some stamps that went through a press change, design change, overprint change, or some other revision. They did not agree, however, how many stamps should retain the "R."

Cibulskas is in favor of using "i" on the second precancel of the 7.1¢ Tractor and 10.1¢ Oil Wagon. He wants to use the "R" on all other stamps with two versions, such as the B Press versions of Cottrell stamps, or new designs for the B Press.

Wheeler prefers a system where the "R" is reserved for stamps where a collector can instantly distinguish between two versions and to use "i" for stamps where more sophisticated techniques are required. Thus, Cibulskas would make

the B Press 14¢ Iceboat 14T2R, but Wheeler would prefer 14T2i. In this instance, the two versions can be told apart only by the presence or lack of a joint line and by the difference in tagging.

Your views are urgently requested. The 1990 catalog will follow a course in which you have had a voice.

The following view is from Myron G. Hill, Jr., of the study group. It is printed in full because it is a fine restatement of the reason for having our own catalog numbers in the first place: ease of use.

By Myron G. Hill, Jr.

When *The Plate Number Coil Catalog* was reviewed in *Linn's* by Wayne L. Youngblood, he called the catalog "indispensable," but termed the numbering system "most confusing." This is true.

The descriptive notation of the catalog numbers is useful only if it can be kept simple. After seeing a particular catalog number, one should know immediately the stamp to which it refers. Also, by looking as a PNC, one should immediately know the catalog number.

However, using Roman numerals at the end of the catalog numbers to show

tagging types makes the simple numbering system complicated.

Alan Thomson suggested that using the "i" and "ii" on the 25¢ Yosemite to differentiate between block-tagged and phosphored coils should be omitted by omitting "i" for block-tagged coils and describing the phosphored coils with "i." Thus, the 25¢ Plate 9 block-tagged coil would be 25F9 and the phosphored coil would be 25F9i. To this I say #\*@&!! because the added Roman numerals mean that our numbers are written in hieroglyphics.

One can easily remember that "F" stands for "Flag," but it is not so easy that "i" means "phosphored."

I submit that the best method of maintaining an easy-to-understand descriptive catalog numbering system is simply to state the UV characteristics of the stamp, e.g., "25F9 block-tagged." This is longer, but it is more easily understood.

However, it is collectors who should decide the catalog numbering system that is most useful to them. I urge collectors to write to Steve Esrati to let him know what system of notation you prefer. If you do not collect tagging varieties, you should also write so that the importance of the numbering system can be determined. □

## and on listing half gaps ...

One major criticism of the 1989 *Plate Number Coil Catalog* was voiced by Dr. Robert Rabinowitz. He said the catalog should include half gaps.

A poll of the PNC Study Group found little support for Dr. Rabinowitz' view.

The study group's Wayne Youngblood, writing in *Linn's*, said:

Some specialized collectors do save these freaks, but half gaps are not normally produced varieties and do not belong in a catalog that very likely helps create a market for whatever it lists.

Half gaps are the mat overprint equivalent of misprints. A slight shift can cause a gap to appear anywhere across the face of a stamp. This alone does not make them a major variety, nor does it make them particularly desirable. Half- and quarter-gap strips are simply stamps with poorly centered overprints. Real gaps occur, and were intended to occur, at the perforations.

One of Dr. Rabinowitz' reasons for wanting the half gaps in the catalog is that the Lighthouse PNC album includes spaces for some half gaps. Several members of the PNC Study Group were agast when they found out that Lighthouse had included such strips.

But two such Lighthouse entries point

up the problem. Page 8A includes a space for Plate 3 of the 5.2¢ Sleigh (Page 8B has a similar space for Plate 5) with a gap at 1 1/2 Left. But the space is clearly marked as being for either the half gap or for a strip with the gap at 2L.

Strips are known with the gap at either 1L or 2L. If you already have both of these as well as a half gap you are short one space.

On Pages 11B and 11C, Lighthouse provides spaces for three strips: 1R, 1 1/2R and 2R on Plates 3 and 4 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon. Here, if you have all three strips, you can mount all of them. Clearly, Lighthouse is not consistent.

Several dealers, including Dr. Rabinowitz, obtained half-gap strips from Diane Thompson when she first unearthed them. Demand for them has been poor (which is not surprising since many PNC collectors do not collect gaps at all). Should the catalog, therefore, cater to those few dealers who have an interest in selling their strips?

The floor is open to you on this issue, as well. □

## or Honeybees

Discovery of the first production run of Plate 1 of the 25¢ Honeybee, reported on Page 95, adds yet another PNC in which there are more than two catalogable types with the same plate number.

Logic dictates that the first printing should get the main catalog entry and that the later printings, with truncated plate numbers, should be assigned a number with a suffix.

The truncated version was the first found by collectors and is the common sort.

All ideas on how to list the two types of 25M1 are welcome. Steve Esrati would prefer 25M1 to be assigned to the untruncated printing and that 25M1i be assigned to the smaller numbers. But if Myron Hill's ideas are accepted, these would be: 25M1 Tall and 25M1 Short.

What do you think?

Ours is the catalog that listens! □



## Prices up a bit as market stays near \$180

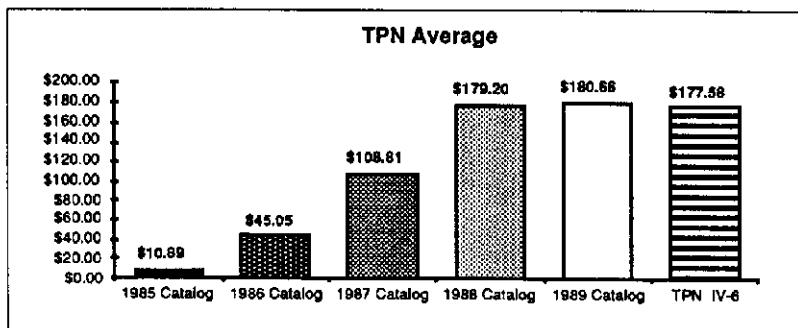
The TPN Average continued its flirtation with the \$180 resistance level during the past two months, rising to \$177.48 from the \$173.49 recorded in the September issue.

Some items in the average climbed during the period. September prices were also depressed by some dealers' summer sales.

As the accompanying chart shows, there has been remarkable stability in the TPN Average after the initial sharp run-up that ended with the 1988 catalog. This is so despite the fact that some strips (notably Plate 12 of the 20¢ Fire Pumper) dropped sharply from the \$330 level recorded in the 1988 *PNC Catalog*.

Other strips that have declined, though less dramatically, since the 1988 catalog are Plate 11 of the 20¢ Flag (which was at \$40 in the 1986 catalog and now averages at \$12.04) and Plate 1 of the 20¢ Fire Pumper, then listed at \$225 and now at \$156.17.

Showing the greatest gains over the 1988 catalog are Plate 4 of the 20¢ Flag (now \$254, up from \$235); Plate 3 of the 22¢ Flag (at \$49.55, up from \$12); Plate 6 of the 5.9¢ Bicycle (at \$63.83, up from \$45); Plate 8 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon (up from \$95 to \$108.38); Plate 1 of the 18¢ Surrey (up from \$62 to \$70.36); Plate 11 of the



20¢ Fire Pumper (now \$46.38, up from \$37.50), and the 22¢ Official (up \$18 from \$50).

The increases in those stamps offset some of the loss resulting from the putting back on sale of Plate 12 of the Pumper.

Items outside the TPN Average that have been climbing gradually this year include the precanceled 20¢ Flag, Plate 2 of the 6¢ Tricycle and the precancels of the 8.5¢ Tow Truck.

Unmeasured by the TPN Average, which prices only strips of five, are commercial covers. Dealers report strong demand for these. Prices, however, are not widely publicized.

A remarkable unanimity appears to exist among dealers on Plate 3 of the 22¢ Flag with only a few dollars separating the highest from the lowest prices. The scarcity of this stamp, however, is not known because USPS reported 953 million 22¢ coil stamps in its vaults last year. There is no doubt, however, that the strip is now hard to replace in dealers' stocks.

Difficulty in finding replacement stock applies also to Plate 6 of the 25¢ Yosemite, although printing totals would appear to insure adequate supplies of this strip.

## Your 1989 PNC Catalog is STILL my price list

*To avoid a conflict of interest or unconsciously trying to undercut other dealers' prices in TPN, I will sell any PNCs, including many constant plate varieties, in VF at the prices in the 1989 edition of The Plate Number Coil Catalog. These prices are an average of other dealers' prices through April 30, 1989.*

The offer does not apply to stamps priced in the catalog in italics. I do not stock imperforates, used PNCs, or paper types.

I offer all block-tagged and pretagged Yosemites at \$3.75 for VF strips of 5 except 25F6ii, which is \$4.75.

**Premiums and deductions:** For XF, add 25%; for Superb, add 40%. For Fine, deduct 10%; for stamps below the grade of Fine (no cut numbers or designs, but with the joint line missing the perfs), you may deduct 25%. I have many strips of 6 at no extra charge.

**Discounts:** On orders over \$25, deduct 5%; on orders over \$50, deduct 15%; on orders over \$100, deduct 25%. If you are in PNC<sup>3</sup>, you may deduct an additional 5%.

This offer remains in force until Dec. 31. If I am out of stock, you will get a refund and will retain whatever discount you have earned. If I substitute a higher grade, you pay no more; if I substitute a lower grade, you pay less with the right to reject.

If you live in Ohio, please add 7% sales tax.

I offer the same discounts on Lighthouse albums and supplements, Michel catalogs and all Stanley Gibbons catalogs and handbooks. You pay for shipping on these. Please see my Lighthouse ad on Page 109 for a SPECIAL.

I also supply House of Farnam FDCs at \$5 each on a subscription basis. Subscribers are assured one PNC FDC of each issue. Deposit of \$25 required.

**Varieties and gaps:** I carry most PNCs with various precancel gaps. I also stock many constant plate varieties, including almost all those listed in the 1989 catalog. In addition, I know where to find many items, so if I cannot supply them, I'll make an effort to find them for you.

Since the catalog is the most complete listing of PNCs available, and since *TPN* takes a lot of my time, using the catalog as my price list is not only a way out of my ethical quandary, but also saves time—the one commodity I often lack.

**Stephen G. Esrati**

P.O. Box 20130

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## Untruncated Plate 1 Honeybees found *PNC<sup>3</sup> to meet at World Expo*

*Continued from Page 95*

ing is the press run we believe went to press April 14, 1988, with 110,000 impressions off each of the five offset plates.)

The Maves-Koepp stamps, which we are calling the first production run of the Honeybee, have larger plate numbers, all with horizontal serifs, because they were printed before the numbers were truncated to 0.50-0.55mm to keep the product from the two presses in register.

We believe the newly found stamps are from the press run sent to press May 5, 1988, with 802,770 impressions on each of the five plates.

Later stamps from Plate 1 had truncated numbers. New type was ordered for making Plate 2, and all those numbers are also 0.5-0.55mm tall.

The Maves-Koepp stamps are a product of the C Press, with the narrow, rectangular tagging found on the first Plate 1 stamps off the C Press.

Richard Nazar, however, detected a technical problem for PNC collectors on the newly found Honeybees. The truncated numbers appear slightly thicker or

heavier than the original plate numbers. This raises the need for a technical explanation of just how the plate numbers were actually truncated. Intaglio plate numbers are cut into the printing sleeve. To shorten them, it was necessary to fill in the top of the digits. This was done by hand after the sleeves were dechromed.

But on one row, the engraver actually added a serif, probably by using a cutting tool; and on another row the truncated "1" has a sort of knob on top.

The heavier truncated numbers would seem to indicate that the engraver also went over the remaining part of the plate number with his cutting tool, possibly to make sure he had not filled in any parts that were still supposed to print.

The sleeve was then rechromed and sent to press.

Wear affected the numbers once printing began, causing some variations. □

**BUYING PNC FDCS.** Write first, Thomas Gift, 19959 Haviland Ave., Bronx, NY 10472. (4-90)

**LITTLE ADS** like this cost only 15 cents a word (the address is free). PNC<sup>3</sup> members get one free adlet a year. Why not give an adlet a try? What have you got to lose?

## *PNC<sup>3</sup> to meet at World Expo*

World Stamp Expo, being held in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the meeting of the Universal Postal Union, will be the venue for the annual convention of the Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC<sup>3</sup>).

In preparation for the convention, Richard Nazar has been photographing new material to be included in Ken Lawrence's APS slide show on PNCs. The slides will be shown at the convention.

As this issue went to press, the exact site of the convention was still unknown, but it will be at 4:30 p.m., Nov. 18, in the Washington Convention Center, which is between 9th and 11th Streets and between H St. and New York Ave. in the northwest portion of the capital.

Parking may be difficult and use of the subway is recommended.

The club is also showing off PNCs in a professionally mounted exhibit assembled from among members by Founding President Gene Trinks. □

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