

The UVM Story: Things are rough all over

Miami, Fla.

By Stephen L. Sickerman

Miami is about 4½ hours south of my home in Winter Haven. I'm an inspector for the state of Florida and was able to schedule work in Dade County (Miami) in the week of Aug. 17-22, in hopes of getting some PNCs and preparing a handful of first-day-of-use covers.

I had spoken to Rita Reyes in the USPS Media Relations office in Miami to confirm the sites and working hours of each post office that was to have a Postal Mailing Center (PMC). I had located all four designated PMC post offices on my Miami road map and was prepared to visit them all on Friday morning, Aug. 21. I did not want to leave anything to chance.

My last inspection Thursday was only a couple of miles from the General Mail Fa-



cility, so I decided to go there for an early look-see. I arrived around 4:30 p.m. and found two USPS employees, a man and a woman, working on the PMC, which looked like a high-tech, stainless steel washing machine with a small black-and-white

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Detroit, Mich.

By Stephen G. Esrati

After driving nearly 200 miles to Ann Arbor, Mich., and hunting down the correct post office, I printed up some Universal Vending Machine coils late on a Friday afternoon in August.

I had been told there would be a technician standing by the PMC machine to help me work it. There was not. I wish there had been.

Nor were there any other collectors or dealers waiting to use the PMC, which is about four feet tall, three feet wide, and two feet deep.

All instructions on how to use it were shown on a small screen, about a foot across and about eight inches deep. The instructions could be switched over into

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Dr. Rabinowitz finds mint A33334 E&S

Some dealers balk at buying them at wholesale price of \$45

Nine months after the 10¢ Eagle and Shield was issued Dec. 13, 1991, Dr. Robert Rabinowitz found rolls of 3,000 with the plate-number combination "A33334."

Only two used copies with that combi-

nation of plate numbers had been reported previously.

The A33334 stamps were among the 14 combinations printed first by Guilford Gravure. But despite all efforts by plate-number hunters, that combination could not be found mint.

The find, according to Al Haake, had some similarities to A32333, of which only 15 rolls of 3,000 were found. Both finds,

he said, were in mixed cases, that is cases in which there were also stamps with other plate numbers. Haake termed the A33334 find as quite small.

Dr. Rabinowitz, who had written countless post offices in searching for the stamp, was notified of the find and went to the post office on the day the stamps arrived there.

The only remaining E&S combination that has yet to be found is A12113, also one of the first 14 combinations printed.

The A33334 stamps originally retailed from \$70 up, but the wholesale price was raised in September and a 20% increase was announced for October by the two dealers who control the stock, Haake and Dr. Rabinowitz. The original wholesale price charged by them was \$45 a strip, but it was raised Sept. 25 to \$65.

Their "introductory" retail price was \$70 for fine, \$84 for F-VF, and \$98 for XF before being raised to \$85, \$102, and \$119.

Several PNC dealers at first refused to stock up on A33334 out of fear that more would be found or because of anger over the high wholesale price.

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Paid circulation this issue: 415

The renewal rate this year is in excess of 85%.

The Morison-McDowell Legacy

As Gordon Morison and Don McDowell involuntarily depart the two top U.S. Postal Service management positions that affect stamp-issuing and philatelic policy, the mourners are mainly those who had hoped to share the spoils and subsidies for a while longer, and not many others.

That's a steep fall from grace. After all, these two men gave us the most popular U.S. stamps of all time—among stamp collectors, that is—the Transportation coil series. We PNC collectors, more than any other hobby group, owe them praise for that.

Nevertheless it was their hubris, not our capriciousness, that doomed their reputations. Some of their bad decisions were inadvertent mistakes, but most were calculated plans based on a vision that defied accountability to anyone, evidently on the theory that postmasters general may come and go, but the bureaucracy persists and has its way.

Until now, that theory worked. While PMG Anthony Frank basked in Olympic ostentation and Elvis exhibitionism, he left the careerists in charge of the store, and they made the most of it. PMG Marvin Runyon is evidently cut from different cloth.

Not everyone agrees with my belief that most of the exalted pronouncements from the fifth floor at L'Enfant Plaza were designed to camouflage corruption and ineptitude, but anyone who takes time to study Richard Sennett's criminal record will marvel that he would qualify to print government press handouts, let alone postage stamps.

Nurturing Sennett's rehabilitation was just one element of the Morison-McDowell scheme "to re-invent the postage stamp," as they proudly boasted. They had a lot of good new ideas but, as Abraham Lincoln would have said, what was good wasn't new and what was new wasn't good.

One source says that McDowell traveled all the way to China to observe first-rate gravure stamp-printing technology, so he surely knows that it is possible to produce superb, high quality stamps using that process. Yet the quality of our stamps has been steadily cheapened to match the press capability available to Sennett and other private-sector contractors. At the same time, a series of gimmicks was dreamed up, each beyond the capability of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, to justify giveaways.

Most resulted in fiascos. Pandering to PMG Frank's background as a banker, the L'Enfant Plaza legion gave us Automatic Teller Machine stamps—suitable for use in just a few places, and made of non-recyclable plastic—complete with a baloney sandwich (that is, a lot of baloney about the high-tech sandwich of ink, paper, plastic, and adhesive that failed the first philatelic test, soakability). Stamp writers swallowed the baloney and then forgot all about it when

The Plate Number

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the third generation of ATM stamps with fewer pretensions belatedly addressed the problem of recyclability.

Every "re-invented" stamp innovation provided a photo opportunity that directed public and philatelic attention away from chronic and worsening problems in the U.S. stamp program; but most failed, and disappeared down the memory hole with no accountability for the millions of wasted dollars. (One exception was the rigged poll seeking to demonstrate public acceptance of Richard Sennett's rouletted coils and stamp sticks.)

Do you remember the Quick Fares 'N Stamps machines set up in nine Washington, D.C., subway stations on Feb. 10, 1989? Wayne Youngblood's photo of Gordon Morison cutting the ribbon at the Farragut West Metro station ran in the Feb. 27, 1989, *Linix*. The machines are still there, but I've never found one in working order any time I've been in Washington.

Later that year came the Automatic Postal Teller experiment, which failed so quickly and colossally that collectors were never able to obtain adequate quantities of Autopost stamps, and already they are scarce and expensive. Used non-philatelic examples are unknown.

The big question is why Morison and McDowell were trying to re-invent computerized automatic postage in the first place, when they were well aware that less expensive well-designed working machines have been available from Matsushita in Japan since 1975, from Frama in Switzerland since 1976, from Klussendorff in Germany since 1981, and from other foreign manufacturers more recently. The Postal Service has used equipment manufactured by Frama in other applications, so the reason can't be reluctance to buy abroad, or unfamiliarity with the quality available.

The failed Autopost experiment didn't deter our dedicated re-inventors, so now we have the ECA GARD variable rate coil fiasco, and coming soon is the Unisys sequel. Within two weeks of their installation, the majority of ECA GARD machines were not in working order most of the time, and any time one is found to be working, it is quickly emptied of coils by stamp collectors and dealers.

In 1984 and 1985, Great Britain experimented with Frama vended postage at four locations in England. The test was deemed a failure, the machines were retired, and one of them now vends souvenir specimen labels to tourists at

Letters to the editor

All letters are welcome. TPN reserves the right to edit and condense letters, to print them as bylined articles, or to reject them. For the sake of efficiency, readers are urged to write to P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. TPN will forward letters to the proper authorities for replies. Unsigned replies are by Steve Esrati.

the British National Postal Museum.

If Jim Bruns sets up a Quick Fares 'N Stamps machine, an Automatic Postal Teller, and an ECA GARD Postage and Mailing Center in the Gordon C. Morison/Donald M/McDowell Room at our new National Postal Museum, he won't even be able to vend souvenirs. Such is the legacy of the men who tried to re-invent the postage stamp, and failed.

Ken Lawrence

Why only in *TPN*?

The Plate Number has in its brief seven years run several articles we expected to be picked up by the big national philatelic newspapers. They were not.

Here's an example from the April 1986 issue, asking: "Do BEP printing totals cover up employee thefts?" It was written by Ken Lawrence:

Three years ago, in connection with an investigation I was doing for *Stamp Collector*, I interviewed James E. McGarrity, who used to be an accountant at the Bureau. It was information furnished by McGarrity in 1978 and 1979 that led to the indictment and conviction of former BEP Director James A. Conlon and Assistant Director Richard Sennett on federal conflict-of-interest charges.

McGarrity's disclosures continued to embarrass Bureau big shots, so he was forced out. I asked McGarrity about the accuracy of printing figures. He scoffed at them: "A lot of times in Accounting they get reports from the machine in the production shop and then right after that they get an inventory account that's completely different.

"Generally they'll go with the inventory account, but nobody says why. So, as it stands now, if they have a paper count that says they should have 10,000 and they go count 3,000, they'll change the paperwork."

McGarrity's conclusion is that Bureau employees are filching lots of stamps and money, and that the officials are covering that up by fudging the numbers.

In 1987, *TPN* disclosed the funny business that barred anyone with a bulk-mail permit from using precancels even if he had a permit to use precancels. The weeklies ignored the report, or made fun of it. In 1988, USPS reversed itself.

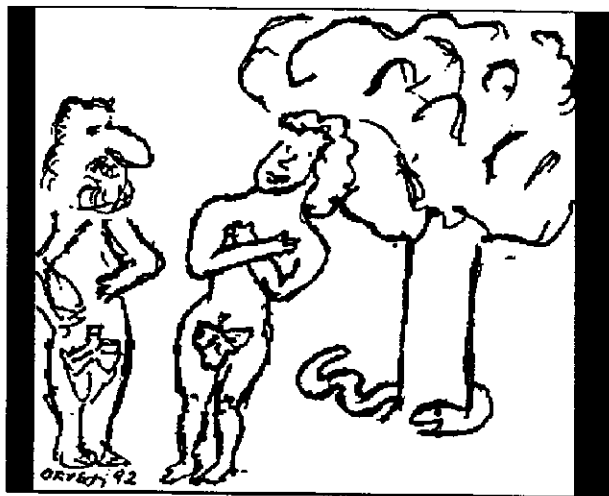
In 1988, we noticed that BEP was withholding data on stamps that were never printed, such as the 19¢ and 20¢ American Red Cross stamps of 1981 and the 19¢ and 20¢ Savings and Loan Association stamp.

We asked why that information had been withheld until 1983. The weeklies did not even mention the story.

TPN's minuscule staff of unpaid correspondents, in addi-

Pedro's World of PNCs

by Pedro Ortegon, M.D.



Adam, there's something I have to tell you. ... It may be costly!
Yes?

Well...I'm thinking of getting into coils!

tion to reporting vast research accomplishments, some of which affect U.S. stamps other than PNCs, has consistently done what the American philatelic press has not done.

Mike Laurence, editor and publisher of *Linn's*, promised that if anything newsworthy comes out of *TPN*, *Linn's* would report it as a news story. It never did, neither on research nor on plain journalism showing up the foibles of the Postal Service, the BEP, and the private stamp printers.

So let me let you in on the secret.

The stamp weeklies are totally dependent on the good will of the Postal Service, which sends them beautiful color transparencies of new stamps long before it sends out black-and-white illustrations to ordinary stamp journalists, like the one who writes for your Sunday paper (although fewer and fewer American newspapers now have a stamp column at all). That advance information is a favor. It lets the stamp weeklies scoop everyone week after week, making them a better source of stamp news than can be obtained anywhere else.

And so they don't rock the boat. They print the handouts from the Postal Service with nary a blue pencil mark, hardly ever questioning the source about seeming incongruities, such as the information that the 29¢ White House coil would have a marginal copyright inscription.

The stamp weeklies, which state that they're serving collectors, are, in fact, businesses living off collectors and dealers. Whether they serve their readers as well as they serve Amos Press and Capital Cities/ABC (the owner of *Stamp Collector*) may be questioned by any reader who wonders why they never, never bite the hands that feed them pap.

Stephen G. Esrati

This issue comes a bit late because Steve Esrati was on vacation for most of October. The January issue will be mailed at its correct time just after the Christmas mail rush ends. Ads for January should be at *TPN* on or before Dec. 21.

LETTERS: *All that stuff about calendering is hogwash!*

All this stuff about coated papers and calendered papers. Hogwash!

Canada uses coated paper on some of its stamps—on one side.

Keith Ott
Acampo, Calif.

Overall-tagged Canal Boat found

I appreciate the coverage of the Great Americans Series. I'd like to see more.

Also, I have the 10¢ Canal Boat on a return envelope (unused) with overall tagging. I've had it in since mid-June. Plate number unknown.

Richard L. Beecher
Los Angeles

(In reply: After you wrote to report this, an intensive search started. Eventually, Al Haake found the stamp, with the same old plate number and with shiny gum. Nobody in the PNC Study Group can explain the shiny gum. It may be that we are getting a host of new stamp papers.

(But a word of caution: We are not yet certain that this new stamp has overall tagging or if it might not be on pre-phosphored paper.

(Readers are urged to check their copies. If we have overall tagging, there should be tagging breaks or untagged top or bottom edges. Reports are requested.)

Answer was incorrect

Your Page 89 reply to Wayne Meyers is not correct. His Bulk Rate 19¢ Fishing Boat cover may be legitimate, although too little is shown to be sure.

Not all precancels are untagged, although today all Bureau precancels lack tagging phosphors. Any definitive stamp can be precanceled locally, with an authorized device, and then used for any valid precancel purpose.

In addition, any stamps canceled with a mailer's permit postmark are legally considered precancels. Thus, a mailer with a postmark permit AND a bulk-mail permit could prepare a bulk mailing with the 19¢ Fishing Boat stamps by canceling them with the permit device and by including a "Bulk mail" endorsement.

If Meyers' cover was sent without a local precancel or a mailer's postmark, it was not a legitimate bulk-rate usage, but tagging has nothing to do with it.

Ken Lawrence
Jackson, Miss.

Getting annoying

At first, it was kind of fun to snicker at the ongoing feud among some of the PNC luminaries, but after a while it started getting annoying. I realize that there are bound to be professional differences, but some of the bickering is strictly personal. I appreciate your attempts to be fair to all parties, and I realize your need to respond to errors, assumptions, and innuendoes in print, but the continuing war of words among Ken Lawrence, Bob Rabinowitz, and

yourself sometimes takes away part of the fun that I associate with stamp collecting.

May I also comment about the USPS Mis-Information Branch? When are these clowns going to be kicked out? Within the past several years, the PR and Marketing flacks at USPS have brought unwarranted secrecy, mismanagement, and incompetence to a fine art, where it is almost impossible to get a straight answer regarding stamp design, production, and distribution. And worse, they make no apologies for goofing up.

How can the **director** of the Office of Stamp and Philatelic Marketing argue that the UVM coils never had plate numbers after they'd already been printed with plate numbers and still be credible? I give up.

Like you, I hope our new postmaster-general will bring back the communication in the Office of Communication.

Stephen L. Sickerman
Winter Haven, Fla.

(In reply: Responding only to the second part of your letter, let me just say that it is easier for a Washington stamp journalist, whose regular job is to report on the State Department, to learn life-and-death decisions that are vital to our country than it is for him to learn when USPS is going to issue a new stamp. None of this stuff should be secret. As we go to press, *TPN* has learned that a previously issued stamp was to be issued in November printed in yet another manner, but we couldn't name the stamp, the printing process, or the printer because of USPS secrecy rules.)

Calendering and Great Americans

Wolfgang's letter has an error in it that should be corrected. Pressure is not exerted on linear distances; but on an area. Mathematically, a line segment has no area.

Further, why do you seize on his statement that some calender rollers are fiber covered, to explain why some phosphoring is mottled and some solid? If the rollers are fiber covered, it's a very smooth, hard covering, perhaps like tempered masonite, or it would not achieve the desired result of calendering.

To my way of thinking, such a covering explains nothing. You also seem to imply that the taggant is still wet when it passes through the calendering process. Seems to me that could lead to a huge mess.

We need some real answers here if the calendering theory is to have any credibility.

The continued presence of the overall tagged Flanagan entry on the Great Americans chart is a sore spot. Why is it there when no one has ever found such a stamp?

(In reply: It's gone!)

On Page 111, you list several Great Americans that were moved from the A Press to the C or D presses. Among them is the 1¢ Mitchell. Do you have any proof that it was actually reprinted on the C or D press? The A Press left service in the spring of 1991, and the 1¢ Mitchell was removed from sale on Aug. 31, 1991. That would indicate it was not reprinted in 1991 at all, let alone on the C/D

press.

(In reply: BEP made Plate 189023-2 for the D Press on June 22, 1991. It never reported sending the plate to press, but we have BEP reports only through September 1991. The plate has not been canceled. The stamp may have been replaced by the 1¢ Kestrel, but for now, we do not know.)

At the bottom of the same column you list the USPS order numbers for the \$1 Hopkins stamp as shown in that marvelous publication, *Stamps, etc.* It all appears to be a grab bag, but for the record, the prephosphored paper type is supposed to be C1090, not D1090. I have another order in. We'll see what I get this time. So far, 1090 is block tagged and N1090 is overall tagged. If C1090 comes back phosphored, I can say "Eureka!"

Alan Thomson
Northwood, N.H.

The ultimate loss of desire

It's getting to a point where I don't like PNCs much. With all the back biting and price gouging, I've lost the desire to keep up.

I believe there are 14 plate strips of the Erie Blue and the retail on that is \$375 or more. Dealers don't have any of these, so they don't advertise.

Along comes the Toledo Brown and dealers buy up everything they can get their hands on. More than 500 plate strips were found, but two (maybe three) people own them all and they're worth \$150 a strip?

Ditto on the 32333 and 33334 Eagle and Shields.

It wouldn't surprise me if the number of PNC collectors begins to drop in the near future.

Ed Gould
Roscommon, Mich.

In reply: Ken Lawrence has been saying for several months that he expects PNC collecting to be affected negatively for several reasons:

- The multitude of E&S plate-number combinations, with high prices on 50¢ strips.
- The difficulties collectors face in finding post offices with machines that dispense Universal Vending Machine coils.
- USPS policies that result in such things as rouletting.

I would beg to differ. We are in a period of great changes, so we get two or three collectible varieties of some stamps (the Omnibuses, the Circus Wagons, the Canoes, the Rushmores, the 23¢ USAs. I think this poses challenges that many collectors just love. I think this will make PNC collecting more interesting and will keep our hobby healthy.

They're not Flag stamps; the UVM number is wrong

I would like to object to the designations assigned to recent coil issues. The new USA presort stamp is not a Flag issue—it is really a miscellaneous issue. Take all the other Flag issues and line them up. Despite the 23¢ Flag presort being ugly, they really do constitute a similar design set—that is, a full flag in the top half of the stamp over a some-

I was stupid, but getting smarter

In the September issue, I offered Great Americans, priced by Scott. I soon learned that I was charging too little. In adding to my stock, I learned the error of my ways.

Abbreviations used in descriptions:

Tagging: B=Block; O=Overall; P=Prephosphored; U=Untagged (or Untagged salvage)

Perforations: L=L Perforator; E=European bull's eye

Scott	Description	Single	Margin Single	Block	Margin Block	ZIP Block	© Block	Plate Block
1844	1¢ Dix BL	.10	.15	—	.75	.85	1.15 (2)	—
1844	1¢ Dix BL SE	.10	.15	—	.75	—	1.00 (2)	—
2168	1¢ Mich BE	.10	.15	—	.20	.25	.25	30 (1)
2168	2¢ Lyon BE	.10	.15	—	.20	.25	.25	30 (1, 2)
2170	5¢ White BE	.10	.15	—	.20	.25	.25	30 (3)
2171	4¢ Flam BE	.10	.15	—	.25	.30	.50	WANT
2171	4¢ Flam LE	.15	.20	—	.30	.35	.60	40 (1)
2172	5¢ Man OE	.15	.20U	.70U	.40U	—	.45U	.50U (1)
2172	5¢ Man UE	.15	.20U	.70U	.40U	.45U	.45U	WANT (2)
1851	5¢ Knox OE	.15	.20T	—	.50T	.70T	.75T	(4)
★ Plates 3, 4, 5, 6								
2175	10¢ Red BE	.30	.35	—	.70	.75	1.50	WANT
2175	10¢ Red OE	.30	.35T	—	.85T	.90T	1.25T	1.80T (1)
2175	10¢ Red PE	.20	.25	—	.75	.80	1.00	.85(2)
2178	15¢ Cady OE	.25	.50U	—	1.10U	1.15U	1.15U	1.25T (1)
2178	15¢ Cady OE	.25	.60T	—	1.20T	1.25T	1.25T	WANT
1862	20¢ Trum BL	.50	1.00	—	3.00	3.00	12.00	6.00(1)
1862	20¢ Tru BL SE	.40	.80	—	2.50	—	10.00	5.00(1)
1862	20¢ Trum BE	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	WANT	WANT	5.00(2)
Special: matched set of four corner plates (2) blocks: \$18.75								
1862	20¢ Trum OE	.50	WANT	—	WANT	WANT	WANT	WANT(3)
2179	21¢ Carle BE	.30	.35	—	1.30	1.40	1.40	1.55 (1)
2182	23¢ Cas BE	.50	.55	—	2.00	2.00	2.50	WANT
2182	23¢ Cas OE	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	WANT	WANT	WANT
2182	23¢ Cas PE	.65	.75	—	2.00	2.50	2.50	3.00 (2)
2183	25¢ Lond BE	.40	.45	—	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.80 (1)
2184	29¢ Bull BE	.45	.50	—	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00 (1)
2184A	29¢ Warren	.45	.50	3.00	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00 (5)
1854	30¢ Laub BL	.75	.80	—	3.25	4.00	15.00	5.00(1)
1854	30¢ Laub BL SE	.70	.75	—	3.00	3.50	13.00	4.50(1)
1854	30¢ Laub BE	.45	.50	—	2.05	2.15	2.15	WANT
1854	30¢ Laub OE	5.00	5.50T	—	22.50T	30.00T	25.00T	50.00(2)
2185	35¢ Chev PL	.50	.50	3.50	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.45 (5)
1867	39¢ Clark BE	.75	.90	—	3.25	4.00	4.00	5.00 (2)
1869	40¢ Gibre BL	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	WANT	WANT	WANT
1969	40¢ Gibre BE	.95	1.00U	—	3.25U	4.00	4.00	6.00 (2)
2186	40¢ Chan OE	.80	.85U	5.00U	—	3.65U	3.65	4.00U (1)
2186	40¢ Chan PE	WANT	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	WANT	WANT(2)

Scott	Description	Single	Margin Single	Block	Margin Block	ZIP Block	© Block	Plate Block
2188	45¢ Curb BE	WANT	WANT	—	—	—	—	—
2188	45¢ Curb OE	.60	.70U	—	1.15 (2)	—	—	—
1859	50¢ Nem BL	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	WANT	WANT	WANT
1859	50¢ Nem DE	1.00	.80T	—	4.00T	4.00T	5.00T	4.00T (3)
2190	52¢ Hum PE	.75	.80	4.50	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.45 (5)
2193	75¢ Wain PE	1.00	1.10	5.50	3.50	3.65	3.65	4.00 (1)
2194A	81 Hook BE	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	—	—	WANT(1)
2194A	81 Hook OE	WANT	WANT	—	WANT	—	—	WANT(1)
2196	85 Harle BE	1.50	1.65	—	6.25	—	—	7.00 (1)
2196	85 Harle PE	7.80	7.25	—	—	—	—	40.00 (1)
		7.00	7.25	—	25.00	—	—	40.00 (2)

T = tagged salvage on overall tagging; U = untagged salvage on overall tagging; SE = straight edge
This one is not a Great American stamp, but you probably don't have it.

C18 45¢ Lang OE 3.00 3.25T — 15.00T 20.00U 15.00T 22.50(4)
★ 999999 1

NEED: 20¢ Flag sheet stamps.
All prices net; no discounts. I'll pay postage on orders over \$10.
I'm buying the items marked "WANT." Please make me an offer.
Prices subject to change. Some quantities limited.

STEPHEN G. ESRATI
P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120
Telephone: (216) 561-9393 FAX: (216) 752-5002

thing. Now look at the USA issue—while it does have a flag, the central design is the shiny letters, not a flag. Just as the Fishing Boat is not a Transportation coil, the USA stamp is not a Flag design.

Also disturbing is the use of the 29U1X designation for the BEP's variable-rate stamp.

I recognize that the Philatelic Sales Division will be selling these with the 29¢ value. I also appreciate that many of these stamps (both legitimate and philatelic) will be 29¢ for the first-class rate. However, there will be many different rates, the whole purpose of the machine. The "F" stamp will always equal 29 cents; the variable-rate stamp will equal whatever is paid for it out of the machine, not necessarily 29 cents. Finally, what happens if the test is extended (or the machine is made permanent) and the first-class rate is raised? Do we change the stamp's nomenclature, or what? I would prefer to see a new category set up for these variable-rate issues—we already have two of them announced, and will probably have more in the future, along with regular, rate-change, and undenominated stamps.

Alan Malakoff
Highland Park, NJ.

In reply: TPN may have been presumptuous in assigning catalog numbers to these USA and UVM stamps. The numbers should be assigned by Richard Nazar, the editor of the catalog, not by TPN.

The discussion, however, comes too late for this year's catalog, which is well advanced in production.

Nazar has recognized the problem with the presort stamps and is putting them in a separate section after the regular Flag series.

Perhaps a solution to the problem of the UVMS can be found before the 1994 catalog goes into production. However, the PNC Catalog's numbering system was set up purposely with the rate

as the first element in the number. Where should one put a variable-rate stamp?

It belongs in the miscellaneous section. It also belongs in the undenominated subsection there. Perhaps it would be best to list it as a variable-rate stamp in a separate subsection. But that still leaves the problem of the catalog number.

Let's assume that we do away with the rate as the first element and list the BEP version of the UVM as UVM1 and the proposed American Bank Note issue as UVM(A11).

The problem now turns on a new facet. What happens when BEP issues a new design but again uses a "1" as the plate number?

At least using the rate that is current for first-class mail at the time of issue will put the stamps into a logical setting, just as U.S. commemoratives are grouped as 3¢, 4¢, 5¢, 6¢, 8¢, 10¢, etc. issues. And this is done even for stamps issued during the period that deviate from those rates.

This, then, is one vote for keeping the designations as 29U1X and 29U(A11)X. If the rate changes after the stamp is issued, there's no need to change the catalog number. It was issued during the 29¢ era.

Comments from readers and other members of the PNC Study Group are welcome.

New 19¢ Fishing Boats due

American Bank Note has begun printing more 19¢ Fishing Boat stamps, using a new set of plate numbers.

While the ABN spokesperson was not certain, she believed the stamps would show an "A5555" plate number.

Four sets of plate numbers were printed in the first run of these stamps. The spokesperson, saying "We're getting better," said she hoped there would only be one set of new numbers. □



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During October / November 1992, after the aforesaid supplements will have become available in North America, the complete sets of album PAGES, too, will be updated to include the new pages and will thereafter be supplied as follows:

PNC Sets of Pages	Period	No. of Pages	Regular Pages without mounts	SF-Hingeless Pages with mounts
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	1981-92	59	-	53 PNC / 2 SF US \$ 189.00
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	1981-92	21	53 CS / II US \$ 31.00	53 CS / II SF US \$ 61.00
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New Address: 255 Duke St., Montreal, Que. H3C 2M2, Canada.

New E&S stamps have numbers starting with a 7

Continued from Page 113

Among those who refused to buy at first were Frank Marrelli, Henry Karen of Michael M. Karen, Inc., Jim Adams, and Michael Lipson. Jerry Koepp of Stamps 'n' Stuff bought only 10 strips, basing his order on the belief that he could obtain more if he needed them. He bought a larger supply at \$40 before the wholesale price went up, getting \$5 off for buying in quantities larger than 100 strips.

Many of the others, except Lipson and Karen, also bought before the hike in the wholesale price.

By Oct. 26, Haake said 60% of the find had been sold.

Dr. Rabinowitz said he was confident that no more A33334 stamps would be found. He cited two reasons:

- Supplies of E&S stamps were extremely low by the time of the find with constant inter-office communications to ship stocks—from post offices that did not need them to post offices that did.

- When the shipment in which the A33334s were found was examined, every box was filled with different plate-number combinations, mostly of numbers that have been extremely common since the stamps were issued.

Some dealers felt that the wholesale price was set too high a level too soon, especially in view of doubts about quantities found. Neither Haake nor Dr. Rabinowitz would disclose the size of the find.

While TPN was unable to confirm the exact number of rolls found, the find was known to have been less than half a case (32 rolls, or 4,000 numbered strips) and somewhat larger than the find of A32333 (15 rolls, or 1,875 strips).

Haake defended the high wholesale price on the basis of the extreme costs that had gone into finding them, including mailings and constant phone calls to all parts of the country.

New printing set for E&S

More E&S stamps have been ordered printed to relieve a shortage of this much-needed stamp, which has by now completely overtaken use of the 10¢ Tractor Trailer stamp.

American Bank Note Co. began printing the new E&S stamps in October in rolls of 500 and of 3,000 with new plates, starting with A7777.

The printing was completed with just those plate numbers, but another order has been received and may result in new numbers.

A7777 stamps were found by Jerry Koepp on Oct. 26 in rolls of 3,000.

New set-aside policy may let you order by number

Starting with this E&S printing, at the request of the Postal Service, ABN will put aside a quantity of each plate-number combination for sale to collectors through the Philatelic Sales Division (PSD) in Kansas City. That means that in future there will be no numbers that have been printed but never found by collectors.

In the past, the PSD has said that it could not honor orders from collectors by plate number. Apparently some new arrangement is going to be made.

Ordering by plate number, apparently, is possible for the E&S stamps printed since the policy came into being.

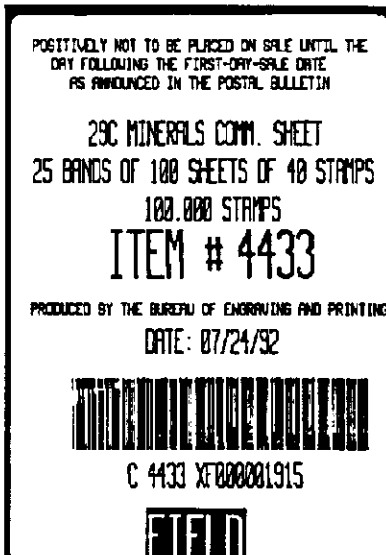
ABN said the new requirement to reserve stamps for the PSD will be carried out each time a plate is changed. The number of stamps to be reserved was not revealed.

Numbers on boxes

In another move to improve relations with collectors, the Postal Service has requested that ABN place on the carton the plate-number combination of the stamps inside.

Stamp Venturers has received the same request.

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing



BEP BOX LABEL—The "FIELD" at the bottom says "SELECT" for philatelic stock. The plate number does not appear on these labels, although it will on labels from American Bank Note and Stamp Venturers.

has developed a new computerized label that gives the date on which the stamps were printed.

23¢ Flag

ABN revealed that its recent order to reprint the 23¢ Flag stamp, those bearing the plate-number combination A333, consisted entirely of rolls of 3,000.

The entire order was printed with only the A333 combination.

The stamps were printed to bridge the gap until rolls smaller than 10,000 are available of the new 23¢ USA coils. BEP was to print such smaller rolls.

[While the original USPS announcement said BEP's version would be printed by intaglio, that was obviously a mistake in view of the design of the 23¢ USA stamps. A later announcement, while not termed a correction, said the BEP stamps would also be printed by gravure.]

23¢ USA

A new printing has been completed of the 23¢ USA stamps. The previous printing consisted of an entire run with the combination A1111. ABN said this run was entirely A222. BEP's version, found in rolls of 500 and 3,000, carries the number 1111.

Plate-activity reports

At the request of the Postal Service, printers have now been asked to provide exact totals for each plate-number combination.

In the past, TPN and the *Plate Number Coil Catalog* have attempted to calculate quantities printed and the maximum number of PNCs that could exist of each plate-number combination from the data provided for each cylinder or sleeve.

In recent years, that has become increasingly difficult to do. The E&S stamps made it impossible because so many combinations were printed on the same cylinder.

ABN has recalculated its entire output of Eagle and Shields and was to send that report, with precise totals for each combination, to the Postal Service in September.

It had not yet recalculated totals for the 23¢ Flag, but expected to send those totals to USPS with its October reports.

The last *Plate Activity Report* sent out by the Postal Service was dated May 1992. It included the May totals from ABN and Stamp Venturers, but stopped with September for reports from BEP.

It is rumored that a later report has been issued, but it has not, as yet, been received by TPN. □

UVMs make life somewhat difficult for user of PMCs

Continued from Page 113

Spanish at the push of a button.

The PMC said it could take any currency from a nickel to a \$10 bill. So I put in a \$10 and ordered it to print 40 1¢ stamps to find the first plate number.

An ERROR message appeared on the screen. I had exceeded the maximum quantity allowed to be bought, 20 stamps.

[The 20-stamp limit was not universal. The PMC at the Renaissance Center in Detroit allows purchase of 40 stamps.]

I changed my selection to 20 1¢ stamps and ordered it to begin printing.

Another ERROR message popped up. I had exceeded the maximum allowable return of change, \$4.50.

I got my \$10 bill back and inserted two nickels and a dime. One nickel kept coming back. The PMC recognized only about one nickel out of every five and rejected the rest, including the ones it gave in change.

Finally, I printed the first 20 1¢ stamps. I did not know where the plate number should be but found none on this strip. So I inserted more change for another 20 1¢ stamps. This time, I found a plate number near the end of the strip.

It was extremely faint and was on the left side of the stamp at right angles to the design of the stamp. (For a computer-generated picture of a numbered stamp, please see the illustration on this issue's front page.)

Eventually, after more than two hours at the PMC and after spending almost \$70, I was able to print up 11 plate-numbered strips of five of the 29¢ value.

I had goofed a couple of times and miscounted. So I also ended up with one plate-numbered strip of five 1¢ stamps and four strips that were a little of each.

The PMC came up with many frustrating ERROR messages. It would not accept one \$5 bill. It kept rejecting most nickels. It gave all its change in coins (including pennies, which could not be put back into the PMC) and the only way I could have used a \$10 bill would have been by printing up high-denomination stamps instead of the penny stamps I was printing between plate numbers.

It also had a maddening ERROR message that told me to take my letter off the scale, even though I had put nothing on the scale. It absolutely refused to do anything at all until I had pounded repeatedly on the scale to make the ERROR message go away.

The PMC also served up some freaks. One stamp came out with no value imprinted into it at all. The next stamp had the "*0.01" printed high, right over the

red "USA."

I obtained one additional high printing.

I should add here, that I did not attempt to create freaks (which some collectors are calling "errors.") Such freaks can, however, be created intentionally almost at will. One way is to exert tension on the emerging strip of stamps. Another is to try to hold it inside the PMC.

The same thing had happened with the Autopost machines.

Those with no distraction and with deep concentration will be able to obtain a plate-numbered strip of five 29¢ stamps for only \$1.88 by printing up 43 1¢ stamps and one strip of five 29s. But for me the cost came to much more because the PMC kept jamming up and causing me to lose count. I ended up at an average cost of \$4 a strip and ended up with some undesired 1¢ plate-numbered strips.

Joann and Kurt Lenz of suburban Detroit tried the PMC at the main post office in Detroit on Aug. 21, when the stamps first went on general sale. The PMC kept jamming up.

A technician was on duty at the Detroit site, but was supposed to go home at 3:30. He was kept overtime two hours to help the handful of collectors who were waiting.

When the ERROR message came up asking the collector to take the non-existent letter off the scale, the technician pounded on the scale to unjam the PMC. He told Joann Lenz that he had done what it said to do in the manual.

The PMC also disappointed a TV crew from WDIV-TV (Channel 4) that had come to film someone putting a mailpiece on the scale and getting the correct postage to mail it. The crew never got such a shot. All there were at the PMC were collectors.

Whatever the crew did shoot never got on the air; but Joann Lenz said she thought it was because of the pressure of a local murder story, not because of unsatisfactory filming.

The Lenzes next tried the PMC in Ann Arbor. They noted that the lip on the slot through which the stamps were dispensed was too tight, causing the stamps to jam up.

A technician there adjusted the slot, and the incidence of jamming went down.

By early September, this PMC had been reprogrammed so that it no longer asked if a receipt was desired, and it printed no receipts.

At least one dealer, Jim Adams, got his supply in Ann Arbor before the PMC jammed, probably because it was out of stamps.

Washington, D.C.

Dealer Henry Karen of Michael Karen, Inc., started advertising the strips before they came out at \$4.50. His friend, Richard Schulman, went to Washington to buy them for him.

Schulman and two other friends who were printing UVMS for Karen experienced the same kinds of difficulties experienced by the Lenzes and Steve Esrati.

Karen soon raised his price to \$9.

Dealer Michael Lipson, who lives in Reston, Va., an hour's ride from the city, also had difficulties with the PMCs. He said that at one time, three of the four Washington PMCs were out of order.

Collector Myron G. Hill, Jr., who lives near the Wisconsin Ave. post office that has a PMC, found a sign on it saying it was out of order for days at a time.

Lipson had, at first, advertised the 29¢ strips at \$4.50 but raised his price to \$17 a strip.

Karen did create eight sets of First-Day-of-Use covers in which he combined one Autopost stamp and one UVM to make up the current rate on each of the rates originally sold in the long Autopost sets and on the short set of two.

Karen said that Schulman had found one way of reducing the jam-ups. The trick is not to tear off stamps from the PMC at the slot from which they emerge.

If one absolutely has to stop printing, Schulman said to hold the last two stamps that emerged and tear below them.

Lipson said he had learned the same trick.

Kansas City, Mo.

The Postal Service said about a week after the stamps went on sale (see "Data Bank") that its one PMC at the Philatelic Sales Division (PSD) would sell only five strips of 30 including a plate number because the PMC can print stamps at approximately 20 stamps a minute, or 8,000 stamps in an eight-hour shift.

That, of course, is predicated on no jam-ups of the PMC.

The limitation of sales left dealers high and dry. Al Haake placed a standing order for five strips every day against payment from his credit card. Other dealers probably did likewise.

[Dr. Robert Rabinowitz did that, but he also ran an ad in *Linn's* seeking an agent who lived near a PMC to buy strips for him on a commission basis.]

Assuming that the Kansas City PMC

works perfectly, Haake's daily order will tie up the PMC for about 20 minutes a day.

Another firm that did was Artmaster, the big FDC firm in Louisville, Ky., that provides Artmaster, House of Farnam, and Cover Craft Cachets.

Bill Toutant, who calls himself Artmaster's office manager, said that if his order is limited to 5 numbered strips of 30 a day, it will take 180 days to fill his order, which includes some 800 covers bearing PNCs.

Toutant has been told that the Postal Service will attempt to place more PMCs in the PSD.

Asked about the Dec. 18 deadline for servicing first-day covers, Toutant was confident that Artmaster would receive an extension.

"If they can't sell us the stamps, they can't hold us to a deadline. But they've been pretty good about extensions," he said.

What that means is that there will be "FDCs" that will actually have been canceled in 1993!

Oklahoma City

In Oklahoma City, where the stamp was issued Aug. 20, there was a second PMC, not in the lobby.

According to reports reaching *TPN*, a man from Switzerland and four others spent about \$12,000 to prepare first-day covers.

In view of the speed with which a PMC can turn out stamps, these buyers must have been printing up stamps at a higher denomination than 29¢, and without regard to the plate numbers.

It is quite possible that they represented the vast European interest in machine-vended postage, commonly called Frama stamps.

Tagged low values

UVM stamps with denominations of 10¢ or less are, of course, on the same pre-phosphored paper as the ones with values of 11¢ and up although the Postal Service has tried to eliminate untagged low values.

A collector tried out three letters franked only with a 1¢ UVM stamp. One got through with no questions; one was marked "Postage due," and one was marked "Invalid for postage."

The recipient paid the postage due on the second letter.

But as the illustration on this page shows, even a perfectly proper cover bearing a 29¢ UVM stamp, can run into



Joann Lenz
37211 Alper Dr
Sterling Hts, MI 48312-2203



VOID, RETURNED FOR POSTAGE—Perfectly legitimate usage of a 29¢ UVM stamp on a letter Joann Lenz mailed to herself. The stamp was canceled by the Royal Oak facer-canceler and received its ink-jet spray. But the delivering mailman crossed out the stamp and marked the stamp "VOID," and sent it back to the sender. Only part of the envelope is shown here.

trouble. In this instance the stamp was crossed out by pen and the word "VOID" was written at its left, even though the cover had gone through the facer-canceler and had received an ink-jet marking. A rubber stamp "Returned for Postage #77" was added.

In this instance, Joann Lenz merely got back the letter she had mailed to herself and paid no added postage.

Kurt Lenz believes that to prevent use of low values, the Postal Service may program the PMCs to print only values of 11¢ and up. So far, this has not happened, although Ken Lawrence reported in *Linn's* of Nov. 2 that PMCs would be programmed to print only UVMs of 19¢ or more.

Santa Ana, Calif.

The PMC in the City of Industry region is at Monterey Park. Collectors were lined up there at 8:30 a.m. on the first day of operation, Aug. 21, although a 10 a.m. ribbon-cutting ceremony had been planned. The PMC was put into use before the ceremony.

Although programmed to vend 20 stamps, on the first day it was reduced to 10.

The Monterey Park PMC has broken down more than any of the others, so often that Tom Maeder, a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group and newly elected president of PNC³, believes he is now qualified to repair it.

One of the features of the PMC is that it has a \$6,000 Swiss-made bill changer. The technician who repairs the Monterey Park machine said, "It's like gold." But the American-made parts break down constantly.

The company that made the PMC, ECA GARD (of which you've never heard until now because it's a startup company), did not bother showing the direction in which one is supposed to put bills into the machine. In fact, they go in opposite the way they do in all automatic teller terminals.

When Maeder commented on this, the technician opened the PMC and showed lovely pictures that just cannot be seen by the postal user. They're behind the panel where no one can see them.

The technician told Maeder he was told

the machine, at Irvine in the Santa Ana region, would ever be put in place because Postmaster General Marvin Runyon does not want to spend the money.

[The Irvine PMC was moved to a different location later. See "Data Bank." Irvine is in the Santa Ana region; Monterey Park is in City of Industry. According to Maeder, *Linn's* never did get it right.]

The Monterey Park machine is down a lot. The printing mechanism had to be replaced once.

Said the harried technician: "This breaks and that breaks; I'm fixing this and then I'm fixing that."

An interesting thing Maeder noticed is that the printer works off what looks like a typewriter ribbon. He was told it uses a special ink to allow the Postal Service to detect genuine UVMS.

That's a security measure, as is the costly bill changer which is known as an "escrow" bill changer because it always returns the same bills that were inserted if the customer cancels the transaction.

Stamp prices

Several dealers, not realizing the difficulties they would have in obtaining UVM stamps, advertised them at \$4.50 before the stamps were issued.

With the exception of Henry Karen of Michael M. Karen, Inc., not one was able to honor that price after the stamps came out. Karen raised his price later to \$9.

Michael Lipson went to \$17. His theory was that if he prices them at less, other dealers would attempt to clean him out, and if he made it more, collectors would be put off.

Jerry Koepp of Stamps 'n' Stuff ran a \$4.50 price in *Linn's* but had no stamps to sell despite many calls from collectors. (He

also advertised Plate 2 of the BEP version of the 5¢ Canoe at \$1.25 although the wholesale price on this difficult-to-find stamp was set at \$1. Koepp's price quickly jumped to \$2.) Koepp later stopped advertising UVMS.

Steve Esrati sold the stamps at \$10 to his new-issues subscribers, calculating in the cost of a trip to Ann Arbor.

Security

PMCs do have several security features. One is the fact that it always returns the same bill that was inserted by the prospective customer. This is called an "escrow" bill changer in that it will return a counterfeit bill that does not pass muster by the internal device that checks bills.

Furthermore, the Postal Service has a means of detecting something in the imprinted value to make sure a denomination was truly printed by a PMC. It is not yet known what that characteristic could be. It is not a taggant that can be detected by philatelic UV lamps. It might, therefore, be a magnetic ink, similar to that used in imprinting checks.

But those are small-change security concerns compared to the one Tom Maeder noted and reported to the technician at the Monterey Park post office, which has its lobby open around the clock to give box holders access to their mail beyond normal post office hours. (Many post offices keep their lobbies open this way except in areas considered to have high crime rates or to prevent homeless people from sleeping in the lobbies.)

The Monterey Park PMC is situated in an alcove that cannot be seen from the street, thus making it possible for thieves to force it open to steal the money or the blank stamps. Maeder was told that there had been many break-ins at Monterey Park to force open other vending machines.

UVM stamps or PMCs?

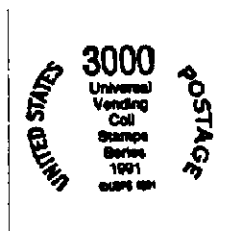
The Postal Service is calling these stamps PMCs for Postal Mailing Center, but when it ordered the stamps from Bureau of Engraving and Printing, it called them "Universal Vending Machine Coils," which is how BEP reported them on its plate-activity reports. The word "Machine" was dropped on the labels, probably to save space.

TPN believes that "PMC" should be reserved for the machines that dispense the stamps, because that's what it says on the machines. We are continuing to refer to them as UVMS, although many dealers are calling them "variable rate stamps."

The stamp is never going to be available in large quantity. BEP canceled Plate 1 on Sept. 3, 1991, after 14,000 impressions printed on Aug. 17, 1991. That gives a maximum of 126,000 PNCs, the lowest "Maximum PNC" total for any stamp yet reported by BEP.

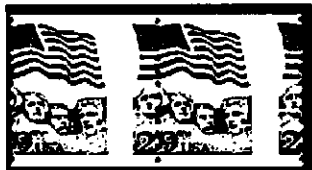
Runners-up include 504,324 for Plate 6 of the 22¢ Flag, 506,610 for the unprecanceled 5.5¢ Star Route Truck (but only 325,000 PNCs were shipped to the Postal Service), and 521,262 for the unprecanceled 7.1¢ Tractor (but only 359,615 PNCs were shipped).

Considering the slowness at which UVMS can be printed and the difficulties in obtaining them, you can expect the prices to remain at current levels, although they may decline after dealers'



LABEL—Text of the label shows clearly what name of stamp is. Also note 1991 copyright, when stamps were printed.

BUYING ERRORS



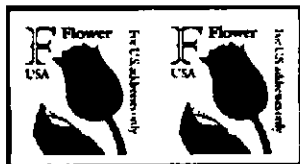
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Data Bank on UVMs and PMCs

Official USPS texts except for (bracketed) additions by TPN

More details released for Postage and Mailing Center (PMC) stamp first-day sales**Two PMC test sites change**

The U.S. Postal Service has announced additional details regarding the ECA GARD Postage and Mailing Center (PMC) stamp first day of issue in Oklahoma City, Okla., on Aug. 20. The first ECA GARD PMC machine will begin service in the Oklahoma City Main Post Office lobby, 320 SW 5th St., at 8 a.m.

To accommodate the anticipated large number of PMC customers on Aug. 20, postal personnel will limit transactions from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. to one per customer. After completing a transaction, the customer may re-enter the line to make an additional purchase. Personnel also will assist customers in preparing their transactions before they reach the machine to facilitate faster processing.

The ECA GARD PMC will allow a customer to print a maximum of 20 stamps, in up to three different denominations, per transaction. For example, a customer could order two 29¢ stamps, five 52¢ stamps, and five 75¢ stamps in one transaction. After the transaction is complete, the machine is ready for the next customer. The complete cycle, including selecting the type of transaction, making payment, and printing up to 20 stamps, takes approximately four minutes.

ECA GARD PMC machines begin service Aug. 21 at 12 additional sites that were listed in *Stamp news* (Philatelic Release) 92-060. The test site listed at 12th and Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, D.C., has been changed to 900 Brentwood Ave. NE, Washington, D.C.

Also, the test site at 2206 Alton Pkwy., Irvine, Calif., has been changed to 15692 Sand Canyon, Irvine, and will not offer service until Sept. 18.

Customers who do not have access to a test site may purchase ECA GARD-venison PNC stamps with a 29¢ denomination (Item Number 7765) from the Philatelic Sales Division, P.O. Box 449997, Kansas City, Mo. 64144-9997. The usual \$10 minimum and 50¢ handling fee applies. Post offices with PMCs will not accept mail orders for PMC stamps.

First-day-of-issue cancellations will be available Aug. 20 on a handback basis at the Oklahoma City Main Post Office from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and for 60 days by mail order.

Philatelic Release 92-067
Received at TPN Aug. 15, 1992

PMC stamp printed by BEP includes plate number**Deadline extended to Dec. 18**

The Postage and Mailing Center (PMC) stamp manufactured by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) for use in the ECA GARD PMC machines does include one plate number on every 48th stamp.

Recent information provided by the Postal Service indicated that the PMC stamps printed by BEP did not include a plate number and that *Stamp news* (Philatelic Release) 92-060, which reported the plate number, was in error. The disparity is the result of a miscommunication between the Postal Service and

the BEP.

The deadline for ordering first-day-of-issue cancellations by mail for the PMC stamp has been extended to Dec. 18. This will allow customers sufficient time to obtain PMC stamps at one of the test sites or by mail order.

The Philatelic Sales Division (PSD) will offer PMC stamps, with a 29¢ denomination only, for sale by mail order. The PSD will not sell intact rolls of 3,000 PMC 29¢ stamps. However, along with individual stamps, the PSD will offer strips of 30 which include a plate number. Mail orders are restricted to five strips or less per order.

The mail order PMC stamps will have the 29¢ denomination printed at the PSD by having the PMC machines print individual stamps, a time-consuming process (approximately 20 stamps per minute, or realistically, about 8,000 per shift).

Due to the highly unusual nature of this stamp and test of the PMC machines, customers should expect it to take several weeks to fill mail orders. All orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis and customers are asked to be patient.

Philatelic Release 92-072
Received at TPN Aug. 31, 1992

PMC field testing

The Postal Service begins field testing a new style vending machine called Postage and Mailing Center (PMC) Aug. 21, 1992. The PMC incorporates the scale features of the weighing-and-rating module with the stamp-dispensing features of a modified stamp-vending-machine module. Customers can weigh and rate a mailpiece or parcel and purchase the exact postage for the transaction. The center prints the transaction amount at the time of sale.

Two versions of the 3,000 PMC coil have been developed for the year-long test. Two slightly different stamps were necessary to accommodate the printing mechanisms of the two contractors that built PMCs for testing. The difference in the two versions is a 90-degree shift in stamp orientation and a slight compression of the image.

Following deployment of equipment in the test cities, PMC stamps may appear on incoming mail anywhere in the country. Field testing will occur in the Washington DC, Detroit, Miami, Oklahoma City, and Santa Ana areas.

Philatelic and Retail Services
Postal Bulletin, 8/6/92

Unisys UVMs still coming, USPS spokesperson says**Continued from Page 122**

stocks ever grow sufficiently.

Chances are that UVMs will see little use by the general public and genuine commercial covers may be hard to find.

Unisys PMCs

As reported in the last issue of *TPN*, American Bank Note Co. printed the UVMs for the Unisys machine in such a way that they would have come out of the Unisys PMCs with the denomination printed upside-down. All it would take to resolve the problem would be to rewind the rolls, a relatively easy procedure.

In October ABN received an order to re-

UPDATE: New stamps, new finds, corrections**New plate number coils**

10T1—10¢ Canal Boat, used, with overall tagging, June 1992. (Beecher) Same, mint, shiny gum, rolls of 3,000. Oct. 12. (Haake)

10U(A33334)—The 10¢ Eagle and Shield in rolls of 3,000 with "A33334," Sept. 10 (Dr. Rabinowitz)

10U(A77777)—The 10¢ Eagle and Shield in rolls of 3,000 with "A77777," Oct. 26. (Haake)

20F4—Plate 4 of the 20¢ Flag, completely untagged. (Mueggelburg)

23F(A333)P—The 23¢ Flag "Presort" in rolls of 3,000 with "A333," Aug. 18. (Haake)

23F11111PX—The 23¢ "USA" coil, printed by BEP, issued Oct. 8. Rolls of 500, 3,000.

23F(A2222)PX—The 23¢ "USA" coil, printed by ABN. (Novak via Cuniberti)

29F4X—Plate 4 of the 29¢ Rushmore in rolls of 100. Sept. New roll size. (Nazari)

29U1X—The Universal Vending Machine coil, called a PMC stamp by USPS, with any denomination from 1¢ to \$99.95, from BEP-printed Plate 1. Issued Aug. 20. [Note: Stamps with other denominations have same catalog number.]

New PNC EKUs

17T6Pb—17¢ Electric Auto from Plate 6 with Typeface B precancel on commercial cover dated Dec. 29, 1983. Earliest known usage. (Washburn in *Coil Line*)

18T18—Plate 18 of the 18¢ Surrey, on 20¢ commercial cover (after rate hike), dated Sept. 16, 1981. Earliest known usage. (Washburn in *Coil Line*)

Great Americans Corrections to TPN

Page 110—The chart should have said "E/E/Cottrell" not "L/Cottrell" because all Cottrell coil stamps were perforated with an electric-eye perforator. These stamps, like those off an L-perforator, have uneven corners. (Lawrence)

New finds

15¢ Cody—Plate 3, confirmed untagged side selva on overall tagging. (Hill)

15¢ Cody—Plate 1, prephosphored. (Hill)

23¢ Cassatt—Plate 2, confirmed untagged top selva on overall tagging. (Hill)

29¢ Warren—Plate S2 on prephosphored paper. (Hill)

wind from the Postal Service and shipped the rewind stamps to USPS in October.

Inauguration of the Unisys PMCs, originally slated for September, was thus delayed.

Asked to comment on the possibility that the Unisys machine may never go into service, a spokesperson for the Postal Service said the Unisys PMC is not expected to go into service this year, but the entire program is still expected to go through in its entirety.

She said a definitive schedule for the Unisys machines had never been announced and that, after all, the entire experiment with UVMs was a test. □

PNC CATALOGS

Previous editions of the PNC Catalog are still available. 1991 is sold out. Each of the six other editions is only

\$5.00 postpaid (\$5.35 in Ohio)

STEVE ESRTI

PO Box 20130

Shaker Heights, OH 44120

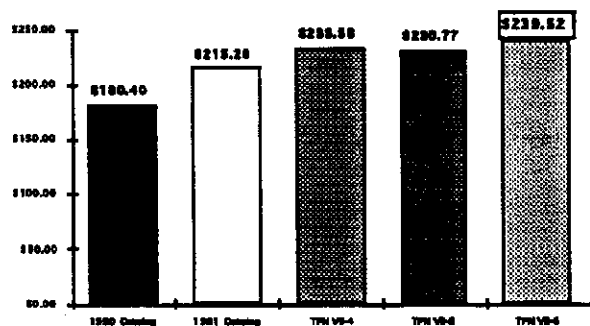
Average dealers' prices on E&S stamps Updated to Oct. 28, 1992

Number	PS/3	P&S	Number	PS/3	P&S
11111	\$2.96	\$3.25	34424	\$4.64	\$4.92
11112	\$3.02	\$3.25	34426	\$4.64	\$4.92
12213	\$14.65	\$15.91	43324	\$4.77	\$4.96
21112	\$2.96	\$3.25	43325	\$3.68	\$4.15
21113	\$4.56	\$4.86	43326	\$3.68	\$4.22
22112	\$2.96	\$3.25	43334	\$3.32	\$3.58
22113	\$2.87	\$3.16	43335	\$3.32	\$3.58
32333	\$165.00	\$166.00	43426	\$4.64	\$4.91
33333	\$5.62	\$5.86	53335	\$3.95	\$4.12
33334	\$86.78	\$87.67	54444	\$4.16	\$4.45
33335	\$4.55	\$4.84	54445	\$4.16	\$4.45

Note to this table: Prices are taken from dealers' price lists and advertisements. PS/3 prices are normally 20¢ less than PS/5 price, but many dealers do not advertise them separately.

Prices have not been adjusted for condition as they are for prices in the TPN Average. The price of A33334 is in flux.

TPN Average



Price changes of strips in TPN Average

CATALOG	SERIES	FACE	PLATE	TPN V5-4	TPN V6-8	% Change
18F1	FLAG	18	1	\$500.28	\$514.67	2.92%
18F3	FLAG	18	3	\$1,135.81	\$1,185.29	4.36%
20F4	FLAG	20	4	\$880.23	\$902.62	2.54%
20F11	FLAG	20	11	\$13.89	\$13.72	-1.24%
22F1	FLAG	22	1	\$15.39	\$15.36	-0.14%
22F3	FLAG	22	3	\$61.47	\$63.05	2.58%
25F5	FLAG	25	5 Block	\$5.50	\$5.52	0.42%
25F5	FLAG	25	5 Pairs	\$10.86	\$10.78	-0.74%
29F1	FLAG	29	1	\$5.77	\$5.81	0.60%
29F1X	WM FLAG	29	1	\$5.76	\$5.84	1.40%
5.2T3	TRANS	5.2	3	\$399.33	\$399.87	3.38%
5.2T4P	TRANS	5.2	4	\$16.82	\$17.70	5.19%
5.9T3P	TRANS	5.9	3	\$25.78	\$29.28	13.56%
5.9T6P	TRANS	5.9	6	\$91.14	\$98.22	7.77%
7.4T2	TRANS	7.4	2	\$13.19	\$12.88	-2.35%
8.4T3P	TRANS	8.4	3	\$19.31	\$23.89	23.70%
9.3T1P	TRANS	9.3	1	\$18.19	\$18.26	5.88%
9.3T6	TRANS	9.3	6	\$303.57	\$318.67	5.30%
9.3T8P	TRANS	9.3	8	\$191.71	\$214.54	11.91%
10.9T1P	TRANS	10.9	1	\$38.01	\$39.02	2.66%
10.9T4P	TRANS	10.9	4	\$412.88	\$420.47	1.84%
17T6	TRANS	17	6	\$20.93	\$21.16	1.10%
17T6Pa	TRANS	17	6	\$53.19	\$55.20	3.78%
18T1	TRANS	18	1	\$105.83	\$111.90	5.73%
18T3	TRANS	18	3	\$79.64	\$87.50	9.88%
18T17	TRANS	18	17	\$7.35	\$7.44	1.25%
20T1	TRANS	20	1	\$191.51	\$198.15	3.46%
20T2	TRANS	20	2	\$1,075.61	\$1,103.06	2.55%
20T7	TRANS	20	7	\$158.08	\$178.83	6.43%
20T11	TRANS	20	11	\$94.66	\$100.57	6.26%
20T12	TRANS	20	12	\$12.64	\$12.59	-0.36%
10U A33333P	E&S	10	33333	\$6.88	\$6.76	-1.67%
19M A1112	FISH	19	1112	\$12.74	\$12.34	-3.16%
29U 1211	F	29	1211	\$32.15	\$36.27	12.80%
20M1	CONS	20	1	\$231.17	\$233.96	1.20%
20M3	CONS	20	3	\$138.79	\$140.94	1.55%
20o1	OFFICIAL	20	1	\$61.57	\$65.63	6.59%
22o1	OFFICIAL	22	1	\$90.26	\$92.45	2.41%

Low-priced stamps begin price hike as TPN Average sets all-time high

While collectors were watching for increased prices in such items as Plate 3 of the 7.6¢ Carreta and Plate 3 of the 8.4¢ Wheel Chair, a lot of other prices started edging up in late summer, led by such prosaic stamps as the 4¢ Stagecoach precancels and the 4.9¢ Buckboard precancels.

These stamps are still very, very cheap, but at last they have come off the bottom.

Other stamps that have risen sharply recently include only one of the "Dirty Dozen," Plate 8 of the 9.3¢ Mail Wagon, which exists only as a precancel.

The two strips with the greatest advances in the past two months have been Plates 3 and 4 of the 18¢ Surrey.

Plate 3 of the 8.4¢ Wheel Chair and precanceled Plates 3 and 4 of the 5.9¢ Bicycle have also risen sharply. In the case of the Bicycles, however, some bargain hunting is possible because some dealers actually lowered their price on these, indicating that they found a supply.

A great leap has taken place in the prices for the overall-tagged 4¢ Stagecoach (around \$20), Plate 2 of the precanceled 8.5¢ Tow Truck (around \$13), Plate 12 of the 20¢ Flag (around \$12) and Plate 13 of the 22¢ Flag (around \$15). All prices are for strips of five.

The 19¢ Fishing Boat with the plate-number combination 1112, has risen more than 10% and the undenominated "F" stamp with the combination 1211 about 8%. But in the case of the latter, collectors should be aware that dealer supplies are in the thousands and price increases could back off.

Small declines were noted in Plates 3 and 4 of the 8.3¢ Ambulance and the plate-number combination 12213 of the 10¢ Eagle and Shields, even though the known printing total of that stamp is quite low.

Starting to move up out of the pack among the 29¢ Rushmores are Plates 5, 8, and 9.

A glance at the TPN Average shows that once again the average has struck a new high, regaining the loss in the September issue and eclipsing the previous high set in July.

A note to readers:

All discussions of pricing on this page have been devoted solely to mint strips of five. Statistics, however, are available for used singles and mint strips of three.

Data for used singles are flawed. Some dealers (and *Linn's* "Trends") do not take into account the difficulty of finding used singles from stamps that have only appeared in rolls of 3,000 or 10,000. However, it is known that such stamps are considerably harder to find.

To complicate matters even more, the averaging out of used-singles prices sometimes leads to an anomaly in which the price is higher than the cost of mint strips, something that is simply not possible, even if one calculates in damage in postal handling and extra work by dealers. In most cases, of course, used singles are made on a hand-back basis and should certainly not gain a premium over mint strips. Finally, prices of used precancels should, ideally, be for uncanceled stamps. This makes it hard to know if they were really used.

TPN will be glad to cover those stamps, too, if readers request such coverage, but it will reduce coverage of strips of five. □

New 19¢ Fishing Boats due

American Bank Note has begun printing more 19¢ Fishing Boat stamps, using a new set of plate numbers.

While the ABN spokesperson was not certain, she believed the stamps would show an "A5555" plate number. □

Test coil to be auctioned to help hurricane victims

Stamp Venturers decided to do something to help the victims of Hurricane Andrew, and the company is doing it with coils, one coil of 3,000 to be exact.

At the World Columbian Stamp Exposition, the firm showed its test coil with an accounting number on the gummed side. If put in use, such a system would allow a postal clerk to see at a glance how many stamps remain on a roll, something that would be especially helpful on a roll of 10,000 or 12,000.

The exhibit caused much interest among PNC collectors, but the company was unable to find a fair way of making the stamps available to collectors.

After the hurricane, Richard Sennett, the company's managing partner, decided to auction off one roll of 3,000 by placing an ad in *Linn's* and by announcing the sale through the philatelic press. The auction closed Oct. 9. Proceeds went to the American Red Cross' Hurricane Disaster Fund.

Sennett also revealed that the design of Stamp Venturers' test roll is taken from a painting by Gene Demetrovics that was commissioned in 1987 by Sennett Enterprises.

"The rendering was intended to serve as a test image that would challenge print registration and provide a full range of color gradation," Sennett said. The test coil to be auctioned off, however, is black and white.

Wrong copyright date

American Bank Note Co. skipped on the wrapper labels used for the 23¢ USA stamps by using the same wrapper it used on the 23¢ Flag. The result is that the USA stamps have the wrong copyright date.

Meanwhile, Jerry Clark, who noticed the label phenomenon, also checked the new bar-coded box labels on stamps printed by BEP. They tell you the date on which the contents were printed.

Just call him 'Scoop'

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz scored a journalistic scoop in the Aug. 29 issue of *Stamp Collector* when he reported a \$390,000 white-collar robbery of the Royal Oak, Mich., post office.

The thieves walked out with 333 rolls of 3,000 and two rolls of 500 of the 10¢ Eagle and Shield and an identical amount

of the 29¢ Flag over Mt. Rushmore.

How did Dr. Rabinowitz find out? Postal inspectors telephoned him in the middle of the night to ask him about the heist because he was a known large purchaser of Eagle and Shields.

The robbers had set up a false bulk-mailing firm, complete with telephones, and "paid" for the stamps with two certified checks drawn on a non-existent bank. The stamps had been ordered in advance.

The con men tried the same stunt later at additional post offices, according to

All the PNC news that fits we print!

the *Postal Bulletin*, but were told they could only get the stamps after the checks cleared. They never came back.

There's a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the robbers, who could face two federal charges: theft of government property and counterfeiting

DAV copy cats

Another charity is using the technique pioneered by the Disabled American Veterans.

Help the Children, a mission of World Opportunities International in Glendale, Calif., sends out return envelopes bearing an untagged strip of five 5¢ Circus Wagons and two tagged 2¢ Locomotives from the B Press.

Joann Lenz named

Joann Lenz has been named chairperson of the Bureau Issues Association's new PNC committee.

The committee, formerly called the Transportation Coils Committee, has had a somewhat stormy history. Steve Esrati was asked to head such a committee by former President Bill Dunn in 1987. Esrati submitted articles almost monthly based on work by the Plate Number Coil Study Group to BIA's magazine, *The U.S. Specialist*. But BIA wanted exclusivity on these reports, barring them from other publications. So Dunn dissolved the committee and *Specialist* editor Charles Yeager wrote Esrati: "I don't want any more articles from you."

Ken Lawrence, after he became a BIA governor, was then named to head the misnamed Transportation Coils Committee.

Since Esrati stopped writing for *The Specialist*, there have been no reports on PNCs. *The Specialist* even rejected an article by Richard Nazar after Nazar and Kim Cuniberti identified new papers, starting with Type III.

What's a Flag stamp?

Richard Nazar ran into a problem in preparing the first section of the 1993 *PNC Catalog*, the Flag section.

According to Nazar, the Flag Series is defined as being made up of stamps showing the flag over a national monument.

But the 23¢ presort stamps don't fit that definition.

Meanwhile, Wolfgang Schön, publisher of the Lighthouse album, has decided to arrange the album to match the *PNC Catalog* and has put the Flag Series up front, including the two 23¢ stamps.

Nazar found a solution. In the new catalog, the Flags, including the 23¢ stamps, will be in a section called "Flag Coil Stamps."

Said Nazar, "That should keep Wolfgang happy!"

E&S quantities

Using only the incomplete plate-activity reports reproduced in *TPN*, Mike Stefun has done some preliminary studies on the 10¢ Eagle and Shields. These figures, of course, are subject to radical change when we get complete and final data from American Bank Note Co., which said it would in future report exact quantities for each combination of plate numbers instead of reporting for each single cylinder.

Stefun's tentative impression totals and *TPN's* calculations for maximum PNCs are:

Number	Impressions	Max. PNCs
12213	20,674	372,132
32333	15,239	274,302
53335	28,322	509,796

No se-tenant coils

Scratch that se-tenant commemorative coil due out Oct. 12 in honor of Christopher Columbus.

"That was on the program way back when we were considering the 1992 stamp program," a spokesperson for the

Postal Service said, "but it's not on the program any more. The stamps will not be issued."

The stamps were to have been a triplet of different designs in rolls of 50. If the stamps had been printed on either the intaglio or the gravure presses of BEP, that would have meant that the stamp in the middle of the triplet would have had the plate number since three can be divided into either 48 (the C or D presses) or 24 (the Andreotti).

Chances are it would have been in commemorative stamp size, a proposal stamp writer Ken Lawrence has long advocated.

Morison is out

The man in charge of philately at the Postal Service since 1971, Gordon C. Morison, retired in September just before he would have been forced out in the reorganization that will trim 1,444 employees from the Postal Headquarters staff of 2,291.

Don McDowell, former head of the Office of Stamp and Philatelic Marketing, was still working at the end of September, but no longer was the man in charge of stamps.

Joe Peng, head of the Office of Stamp Manufacturing before the reorganization, joined Morison and McDowell in issuing a prospectus for a private company to advise foreign countries on stamp production in the United States.

Not related to the reorganization was the resignation of Jack Rosenthal as head of the Citizens Stamp Advisory Commission.

Morison's tasks will be split between James Tolbert, manager of stamp management, and Michael Spates, manager of stamp acquisition.

Now it's booklets

Included with Al Haake's September-October price list was a price list for mint booklet panes and unexploded booklets. Haake is the second PNC dealer to take up booklets. A.S. Cibulskas has been doing so for several years.

Gripes solicited

Debora K. Bowker, vice president for communications of the Postal Service, met recently with a delegation from Writers Unit 30 of the American Philatelic Society to discuss what USPS could do to improve the flow of philatelic information.

She sought advice from philatelic writers and editors: *TPN's* reply listed these gripes:

- Give a month's notice of the issue of

new stamps (on the Eagle and Shields, the announcement was distributed one day before the stamp was issued).

- Provide plate-activity data on a timely basis.
- Spell out which press prints a new stamp.
- Give the PMS color for stamps.
- Provide tagging data for new stamps.
- Provide a table of organization, with phone numbers, of the reorganized Postal Service.

Roll sizes

Richard Nazar has found the 29¢ White House Flag from Plate 4 in rolls of 100. This is the first report of that roll size.

The Akron, Ohio, post office has been selling rolls of 3,000 of the 29¢ Rushmore from Plate 8, said Rocco Caponi. Most of the stamps are centered high, he said. Most of the rolls were bought by a collector who resold them to Long Island dealer Henry Karen. The rest were bought by Bob Freed, an Akron dealer.

Going by the book

Accountable paper clerks who go by the book are not supposed to open more than one case (32 rolls of 3,000) at a time, so Al Haake, in his hunt for A32333 of the Eagle and Shield, called one such clerk in the Chicago metropolitan area more than 40 times to see if he had found any. The answer was always "no."

But recently, Haake was offered five strips by a collector. Two of the strips were all curled up, indicating that they had either come from the inside of a roll or that they had been rolled up in a rubber band.

A few days later, a second collector in the same area offered Haake two more curled-up strips, and Haake called him up to find out whether a whole roll had perhaps been found.

Alas, the second collector had found them at a Toyota dealer who had been cleaned out of some 20 strips earlier by the first collector. The second collector even checked accountable paper, but there were no more left.

But after all those calls, Haake had added seven strips to his stock. He said he was glad to get them.

Overall 30¢ Laubachs

Hank Karen of Michael M. Karen, Inc., has been beating the bushes looking for the overall-tagged 30¢ Laubach in the Great Americans Series.

He recently cleaned out two post offices that said they had them on Plate 2, but when he got the stamps back to his office,

he had picked up only a dozen sheets, some in terrible condition. The rest were block tagged.

The overall-tagged stamps have become a hot item among the Great Americans, with prices climbing swiftly.

New 10¢ Canal Boat

Richard Beecher found a used overall-tagged 10¢ Canal Boat in June. That started a hunt for the stamp mint. Finally, in October, Al Haake found it. The surprise was that the stamp has shiny gum.

The find may put to rest an unsuccessful search for untagged Canal Boats. Joe Peng, former head of the Office of Stamp Production, told *TPN* that those stamps had been printed.

Scott changes policy

Scott Publishing Co., which has refused in the past to list the 25¢ Honeybee with the black offset color missing, has changed its mind. They will now be listed as a "color missing" error.

The original decision was based on a finding by the Philatelic Foundation that some tiny amount of black did show up on the stamps.

Edwin Jones dies

A Baltimore dealer recently offered Al Haake a U.S. collection which, he said, included many PNCs. Haake asked the name of the collector and was told it was Edwin Jones, a name that struck a responsive chord in Haake.

"Check the 20¢ Fire Pumps," Haake said. "See if there are any 12s and 14s."

There were, because Mr. Jones was the first finder of those then-elusive numbers.

It is believed that Mr. Jones shared his find with Wayne Chevery, then a Baltimore dealer, who retailed them.

The strips were once among the "dirty dozen" among the most expensive PNCs. The price collapsed after the Postal Service put more on sale from its vaults after the April 1988 rate increase.

Untagged errors

Doug Iams has found untagged, no-number, on-paper singles of the 25¢ Honeybee and the 18¢ Surrey.

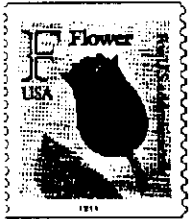
The Honeybee was known (and listed in the *PNC Catalog*) from Plate 2. It was originally found on letters mailed by Tom Maeder, who did not retain a mint untagged strip.

The 18¢ Surrey had not previously been reported without tagging. Collectors are urged to check their holdings in UV.

Iams also found an untagged, used, on-paper 17¢ Rachel Carson. □

Try me, you'll like it!

You'll love my big discounts, my no-quibble return policy, my VF quality. This list (List 3) is good through Jan. 3. 25% off on orders over \$100; 15% off on orders over \$50; 5% off on orders over \$25; 5% additional off for members of PNC³. Prices are for VF. Deduct 10% for Fine; add 25% for XF.



The rarest "F" stamp goes on sale!!!
29U1211 PS/5 VF \$28; XF \$35.
10 strips VF \$250; XF \$315.

	PS3	PS6
1p Omnibus 1, 2, 5, 6	.55	.60
3, 4	1.10	1.25
B Press 1, 2	.80	.90
Unragged 2	.70	.75
2 Locomotive 2, 3, 4, 6,		
8, 10	.60	.70
B Press 1	.85	.95
3e Handcar 1, 2, 3, 4	.90	1.00
3e Conestoga Wagon 1, 2	1.00	1.05
3, 4e School Bus 1, 2	1.50	1.65
PC 1, 2 (1R, No Gap)	6.50	7.00
4e Stagecoach 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1.80	2.00
PC 3, 4 (1L, 2L)	4.90	5.00
PC 3, 4 (Line Gap)	8.40	8.50
PC 5, 6 (1L)	7.75	8.25
PC 5, 6 (2L)	8.25	8.75
PC 5, 6 (Line Gap)	8.75	9.00
Same, B Press 1	1.50	1.75
Overall ragged 1	17.90	19.00
4e Steam Carriage 1	2.00	2.25
Unragged	1.75	2.00
4.9e Buickard 3, 4	1.05	1.80
PC 1, 2 (1R, No Gap)	1.40	1.75
PC 3, 4 (2L, 1L)	5.75	6.50
PC 4 (No Gap)	—	13.75
PC 3, 4 (Line Gap)	5.75	6.50
PC 5, 6 (PS/7)	—	7.00
PC 5, 6 (No Gap)	7.50	7.75
PC 5, 6 (1R)	—	7.50
PC 5, 6 (3L, PS/7)	—	7.00
PC 5, 6 (2L)	—	7.60
5p Motorcycle 1, 2, 3, 4	1.45	1.55
5p Milk Wagon 1	1.35	1.45
5p Circus Wagon 1	1.35	1.45
Same, unragged 1	1.75	1.85
5p Canoe 1	1.10	1.25
Same, 2	1.90	2.00
Gravured S11	1.65	1.75
5.2e Sleigh 1, 2	10.75	15.00
3	195.00	200.00
PC 1, 2 (No Gap)	12.00	12.75
PC 3, 5 (No Gap)	11.75	12.00
PC 4, 6 (2L)	—	16.00
PC 4, 6 (No Gap)	15.00	16.00
5.3e Elevator 1	1.50	1.65
5.5e Star Route Truck 1	2.75	3.00
PC 1	2.15	2.25
PC 2	3.35	3.50
5.9e Bicycle 3, 4	12.50	15.00
PC 3, 4 (No Gap)	28.00	32.00
PC 5, 6 (Line Gap)	90.00	95.00
6p Tricycle 1	1.55	1.80
PC 1	2.20	2.50
PC 2	8.50	9.00
7.1e Tractor 1	2.65	2.75
PC 1	2.75	3.00
PC 1 "ZP-4"	2.50	2.75
7.4e Baby Buggy 2	10.00	12.25
PC 2	3.70	4.20
2255 7.6e Carrel 1, 2	2.75	2.90
3	8.50	9.00
8.3e Ambulance 1, 2	2.00	2.25
PC 1, 2 (2)	2.10	2.25
PC 1, 2 (1L, Line Gap)	2.25	2.50
PC 3, 4 (No Gap, PS8)	—	11.50
PC3, 4 (1R)	5.00	5.50
B Press, 1	4.15	4.50
2	4.60	5.00
8.4e Wheelchair 1, 2	2.75	3.00
3	24.00	24.50
8.5e Tow Truck 1	3.00	3.30

	PS3	PS6
8.5e PC 1	3.60	4.00
PC 2	10.50	11.00
9.3e Mail Wagon 1, 2	12.75	15.50
3, 4	42.50	45.00
5, 6	290.00	300.00
PC 1, 2 (2L, No Gap)	17.00	18.00
PC 3 (2R, No Gap)	41.00	46.00
PC 4 (1R)	—	46.00
PC 4 (2L)	—	30.00
PC 4 (Line Gap)	20.00	20.50
PC 5, 6 (2L, No Gap)	4.00	4.50
PC 8	275.00	280.00
10e Canal Boat 1	1.90	2.00
Overall ragged 1	1.90	2.00
10e Tractor Trailer 1	2.35	2.55
(10e) Eagle, Shield		
11111, 11112, 21112, 22112, 22113, 43334,		
43335, 53335, 77777	3.30	3.50
21113, 33333, 33335, 43324, 43325, 43326,		
43426, 54444, 54445	4.80	5.00
34424, 34426	5.80	6.00
12213	15.00	16.00
32333	180.00	180.00
33334	84.80	85.00
10.1e Oil Wagon 1	2.75	3.15
PC 1, 2 (No Gap)	3.30	3.50
PC 2 (Lin Gap)	4.70	5.00
Red PC 2, 3	3.10	3.40
10.9e Hansom Cab 1, 2	20.00	35.00
PC 1, 2 (Line Gap)	30.00	32.00
PC 1, 2 (1R)	—	50.00
3, 4 (Line Gap)	350.00	—
11e Caboose 1	5.00	5.50
PC 1	4.00	4.50
Unragged PC 2	2.25	2.50
11e Stule 1, 2, 3, 4	2.00	2.50
12e Steamer 1, 2	2.35	2.70
PC 1, 2 (No Gap, Line Gap)	2.70	3.00
B Press PC 1	19.00	20.00
12.5e Pushcart 1	3.00	3.40
2	4.00	4.50
PC 1 Light olive, 1/4	3.50	4.00
PC 1 Dark olive, 1/4	3.75	4.25
PC 2	4.00	4.50
13e Patrol Wagon 1	3.20	3.50
13.2e Coal Car 1, 2	3.00	3.25

	PS3	PS6
14e Iceboat 1, 2, 3, 4	2.25	2.50
14e Iceboat B Press 2	4.00	4.30
15e Tugboat 1, 2 (Block)	3.25	3.65
Overall ragged 2	4.70	5.00
16.7e Phocorn 1, 2	4.40	4.75
17e Auto 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3.50	4.00
6	20.75	22.00
7	5.50	6.00
PC 1C, 2C (F only)	9.00	9.50
PC 3A, 4A (2L, 1L)	4.75	5.00
PC 3A, 4A (Line Gap)(Low)	14.00	15.00
PC 3A, 4A (No Gap)	—	4.50
PC 3B, 4B (No Gap)	27.00	28.50
PC 3C, 4C (No Gap)	—	9.00
PC 3C, 4C (1R, Line Gap)	9.75	10.00
—	—	35.00
PC 5A (1L, 2L, No Gap)	5.00	6.00
PC 5B, 6B (1L, Line Gap)	15.50	15.75
PC 5AB, 7AB (PS/9)(SR)	—	17.00
PC 6A (1L, 2L)	12.00	13.00
PC 5C, 7C (No Gap)	25.00	25.50
—	—	12.50
17e Dog sled 2	3.20	3.60
17.5e Racer 1	3.15	3.50
PC 1	4.50	5.00
18e Survey 1	100.00	110.00
2, 3, 6, 8	4.50	5.50
3, 4	75.00	78.00
7	44.75	50.00
11, 12, 15, 16	13.00	15.00
9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18	6.30	7.00
18e Flag 1	WANT	460.00
4	29.00	50.00
3	WANT	WANT
4	10.25	12.25
5	5.75	6.50
7	37.50	40.00
18e Wash 1112, 3333	3.50	4.00
PC 11121	6.00	6.50
PC 33333	3.75	4.25
PC 33333 (dual gum, ragged)	6.75	7.25
PC 43444	8.50	9.25
19e Fishing Boat		
A1112	12.50	13.00
A1212	6.00	6.50
A1111, 2424	3.25	3.50

	PS3	PS6
20e Fire Pumper 1	80.00	200.00
3, 4, 13, 15, 16	5.50	6.00
5, 9, 10	4.50	5.00
7, 8	100.00	180.00
12, 14	13.00	13.50
—	WANT	WANT
6	13.75	15.25
11	60.00	87.50
20e Consumer Ed. 1, 2	47.50	225.00
3, 4	45.00	145.00
20e Flag 1	9.50	90.00
2, 11	6.00	13.00
3, 12	5.00	7.00
4	65.00	WANT
6	90.00	160.00
5, 9, 10, 13, 14	5.00	6.00
8	5.00	16.00
PC 14	60.00	60.00
20e Official 1	22.50	65.00
20e Cable Car 1, 2 (block)	4.00	4.50
Overall ragged 2	6.00	7.00
20.5e Fire Engine 1	4.30	4.70
21e Rail Car 1, 2	4.30	4.70
21.1e 111111	4.00	4.75
111121	5.00	6.00
PC 111111	4.25	4.75
PC 111121	5.00	6.00
22e Flag 1, 7, 13	14.00	16.00
2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16,		
19, 21, 22, 21	5.50	6.00
3	25.00	65.00
4, 6, 11, 17, 18, 20, 21	8.50	9.00
14	27.00	28.00
(22e) "O" Eagle 1, 2	6.00	7.50
(22e) "O" Official 1	50.00	80.00
23e Lunch Wagon 2, 3	4.00	4.50
23e Flag A1111, 212, 333	4.00	4.50
A222 tall middle 2	4.00	4.50
A222 thin middle 2	5.00	5.50
A112, 122	5.00	5.50
23e USA A1111	4.00	4.50
Same, 1111	4.00	4.50
24.1e Tandem 1	4.85	5.30
25e Bread Wagon 1, 2, 3, 4	4.50	5.00
5	5.50	6.00
25e Yosemite		
Block 1, 7, Phos 15	7.50	8.00
Block 2, 3, 4, 5, 8	4.00	4.50
Block 9, Phos 5	11.50	12.00
Phos 1	49.50	50.00
Phos 2-3, 7-11, 13-14	4.00	4.50
Phos 6	16.50	17.00
(25e) "E" Earth 1211, 2222	6.50	7.00
1111, 1222	4.00	4.50
25e Honeybee 1, 2	4.00	4.50
1 Orig. full serif	26.50	27.00
(26e) "F" Tulip		
1111, 1222, 2222	4.00	4.50
1211	27.50	28.00
2211	5.50	7.00
29e Flower S1111, S2222		
S11	4.00	4.50
S2222 (Perforated)	4.50	5.00
29e Mt. Rushmore Flag		
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	4.00	4.50
7 Toledo brown F	142.50	145.00
7 Toledo brown VF	170.00	—
8, 9	8.50	9.25
A11111, A22211	4.00	4.50
29e White House Flag		
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	4.00	4.50
29e UVM 1 (29e PS/5)	9.40	10.00
\$1 Sealplane	7.00	9.00

All stamps are guaranteed genuine and (unless otherwise noted) in VF condition. All stamps may be returned for a complete refund, no questions asked. Some strips may be in limited supply. For XF, please add 25%.

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BEP's 23¢ USA stamp differs only in lack of prefix

The 23¢ USA coil was released prematurely on Oct. 9 in a second version. The two versions resemble each other, but the new one lacks a prefix before the plate-number combination because it was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

A previous version, printed by American Bank Note Co., had an "A" prefix.

The reason for the two printings stems from the "peace treaty" between USPS and BEP.

Under terms of that agreement, BEP was to print no coils larger than rolls of 3,000. The ABN version was issued in rolls of 10,000.

This is the third instance of a split in coil manufacturing.

• ABN printed the gravured version of the 29¢ Flag over Mt. Rushmore while BEP printed all smaller rolls.



• BEP printed the brown 5¢ Canoe while Stamp Venturers printed the red version in rolls of 10,000.

The new USA coil was issued Oct. 9 in Kansas City, but publicity regarding the stamp was received by stamp magazines after its release.

Al Haake first obtained the stamps about Oct. 19. The stamp is regarded as a precancel in the way it is catalogued.

□

Two new coils of 23¢ USA stamp to be issued

The Postal Service will issue the 23¢ USA Presorted First-Class stamp in coils of 500 and 3,000, manufactured by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP), on Oct. 9 in Kansas City, Mo.

There will be no first-day ceremony. ...

The 10,000 coil version, manufactured by American Bank Note Co., was issued July 21 (*Stamp News [Philatelic Release] 92-049*).

The BEP coils were scheduled to be issued on Oct. 30, but increased demand by mailers prompted the earlier release date.

Issue:	23¢ USA Presorted First-Class stamp
Format:	Coils of 500 and 3,000
Issue date:	Oct. 9, 1992
First-day city:	Kansas City, Mo.
Manufacturing process:	Gravure (BEP)
Press:	[Andreotti]
Colors:	Red, cyan, blue, black
Size:	Image: 0.71×0.82 inches or 18.0×20.8mm
	Overall: 0.87×0.965 inches or 22.1×24.5mm
Plate numbers:	Four [1111, spaced 24 stamps apart]
[Paper:	Untagged, shiny gum]
[PNC Catalog Number:	23F1111PX]

More 'yellow-missing' F stamps found in bag of mixtures

Alice Archie of Wisconsin has found two on-paper copies of the 29¢ F stamp in which the yellow seems to have been left out.

On one stamp, the yellow is totally gone and the tulip is gray, with a blue leaf; on the other, the tulip is pink and the leaf contains some green.

Under short-wave UV, both stamps clearly show the outlines of where the yellow ink should have been, leading to the conclusion that these two stamps once had yellow.

A similar stamp was shown to a group of PNC collectors at the 1992 Garfield-Perry March Party. At that time the consensus was that it was a color-missing variety, with a dissent from Steve Esrati, who said it was a chemical changing.

Ken Lawrence, who had been in the majority at Garfield-Perry, later retracted and agreed with Esrati.

In the case of Mrs. Archie's two stamps, the one that shows some green in the leaf proves that yellow was originally present. The other stamp had all the yellow removed.

Unlike the stamp shown at Garfield-Perry, which had a red tulip, the solution used to soak these two stamps off their original envelopes also affected the red. But on both stamps, there are clear traces of red ink.

The conclusion is that both stamps had been soaked off mail after escaping the dreaded canceler, something that appears to be happening a lot these days. The soaking solution changed the appearance of the stamps, but left a residue where the yellow had been, as proven by the clear presence of the rectangular outline where the yellow should have been (probably other elements of the yellow ink).

The human element in such a find is kind of sad. Poor Mrs. Archie opens a mixture bag, hoping at the least to find some purchase worthwhile, perhaps a numbered F stamp showing 1211.

Then there is joy as these two ringers show up on the table. They look wonderful, but because they are different we can figure out what happened.

There was no golden ring on this carousel for Mrs. Archie. □

Eagle and Shield

Major variety: Broken yellow 1

Seven different plate numbers include a yellow "1." The broken yellow, which appears about 5% of the time, is known on all of them. This is a major collectible variety with a limited stock available.

A11111 }
A21112 } \$15.00 each
A22112 } NET

A11112 }
A22113 } \$22.00 each
 } NET

SET: All seven, including A21113 and A12213: \$195.00 NET

All F-VF; XF add 20%; XF-S add 40%

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APS BIA PNC³

What do the incidence tables really tell us?

By Doug Iams

I decided to compare the incidence of used PNCs reported in *The Plate Number* with what was reported in *Coil Line* and with dealers' ads and *Linn's "Trends"* and found some interesting things along the way.

'F' Coil

The first three columns of Table 1 list the different plate numbers of the "F" coil and the incidence of each as reported by *TPN* and *CL*.

The *CL* data include reports through the September issue and the *TPN* data are from the May issue. (Note: There was a typographical error in the May *TPN* chart. The number of 1111s should have read 444 instead of 4444.)

With the exception of the fact that *TPN* reporters have been much luckier at finding 1211, the percentages are in good agreement. Since there is a large overlap in the *TPN* and *CL* reports¹, it is not surprising that the percentages are similar, but the fact that they are different points up the fact that it is pointless to report percentages of all but the really scarce numbers to two digits beyond the decimal point.

So, if the percentages are close, what's the big deal? The grand totals hide a bias. *TPN* only reports the sorters' names and the grand total for all sorters. *CL* details the breakdowns for each sorter and lists their source (local utility company, national insurance company, mixture dealers, etc.)

The fourth column of Table 1 shows the findings reported to *CL* by one person with access to a large number of covers from eastern Washington and northern Idaho. There are clearly some significant differences between these findings and the grand total of all *CL* reporters. Since the number of "F" stamps reported by this one collector represents more than 39% of the grand total of all *CL* reports, the grand totals are obviously biased by this one region.

[Comment by *TPN*: It is precisely because we realized that there are regional differences that we have never reported an individual's results separately. Mr

Iams said: "The point I am trying to make is that if you look only at the totals, you miss the fact that they are biased by such a huge amount of data coming from one regional source."

[We have repeatedly warned that findings of used PNCs do not determine mint strip prices, since those are based on supply and demand. Or, stated another way, if used copies are scarce and dealers have adequate supplies of mint strips, the mint price will not be high and collectors of used stamps will simply buy a mint PNC from a dealer and get it canceled. A good example of a scarce used stamp are Plates 17 and 18 of the 18¢ Surrey, which was rarely found used during its period of validity, but is cheap as a mint strip.]

Plate	TPN	CL	WA
1111	15.5%	15.7%	6.5%
1211	1.15%	0.16%	0%
1222	24.9%	25.3%	31.9%
2211	1.75%	1.22%	0%
2222	56.7%	57.6%	61.6%
Total	2,862	3,742	1,483

Plate	Actual #	Actual %
1111	622	16.79%
1222	889	23.46%
2222	2110	56.97%
1211	34	0.92%
2211	69	1.86%
Totals:	3,704	100.00%

29¢ Flag (Mt. Rushmore)

A similar analysis of the 29¢ Rushmore is given in Table 2. Again, the percentages reported by the one sorter in Washington are significantly different from the grand totals, but this time his report makes up only 18% of the grand total. The grand total percentages for both publications are generally in agreement, although they differ on whether Plate 2 or Plate 6 is scarcer. From what I have seen in dealers' used price lists, it appears that Plate 2 is scarcer. The latest *Linn's "Trends"* for PNCs (June 29) inexplicably listed Plates 1 through 7 at the same price.

Where are the used Rushmores printed on the gravure press? Are we not finding them, not reporting them, or are they not being used?

[Comment by *TPN*: It has always been a phenomenon of reports by sorters that stamps issued only in rolls of 10,000 are under-reported. That is because they are used only by large mailers with affixing

machines, not the sort of material available to sorters.

[Mr. Iams replies: "That depends on the source of the material sorted. Since they are only used by large mailers, they will not turn up on utility and insurance covers, but a few should turn up in better used mixtures (just as precancels do)."]

Plates 5, 8, 9, and the gravured A22211 were intentionally left out of the table since they have not been out long enough for enough data to accumulate, but if I had to guess, I would guess that Plates 5 and 8 will be as scarce or scarcer than Plates 2 or 6 and that Plate 9 will be less common than Plates 1 and 4.

Even though the 29¢ Flag Over Mt. Rushmore has been replaced by the 29¢ Flag Over the White House, we still need people to continue reporting on their Rushmore finds so that we can fill in the picture for later plate numbers.

Plate	TPN	CL	WA
1	16.5%	17.5%	15.3%
2	3.8%	4.3%	9.0%
3	26.3%	23.4%	35.7%
4	12.7%	12.9%	5.3%
6	3.1%	4.7%	2.8%
7	37.4%	37.2%	31.9%
A11111	.09%	.03%	.16%
Total	3,265	3,515	636

Plate	Actual #	Actual %
1	1040	18.07%
2	196	3.41%
2i	3	0.05%
3	1185	20.59%
4	796	13.83%
5	14	0.24%
6	221	3.84%
6i	1	0.02%
7	2221	38.60%
8	5	0.09%
9	69	1.20%
A11111	3	0.05%
Totals:	5,754	100.00%

25¢ Flag Over Yosemite

The situation for the 25¢ Flag is less clear. *TPN* calculated percentages for block-tagged and phosphored versions as separate series, but since they are both part of the same series and since there was an overlap when both were being released, it seems to make more sense to look at the percentages for the whole series. Of course this makes all the percentages smaller, but this is no problem as

1. Since the total number of "F" stamps in the May *TPN* was 2,862 and the total for all the *CL* reports through March was 2,897, and since *TPN's* total includes some reports not in *CL*, I must conclude that not all *CL* reports are in *TPN's* total.

[*TPN* comment: Quite correct. We left out any *Coil Line* reports that did not include complete data, such as UV tests (which 25¢ Yosemite, for example) or that did not indicate whether the report was an addition to a previous report or included previous data.]

long as one keeps the comparisons within this issue and does not try to compare percentages with another issue.

[Comment by TPN: We refused from the outset to include any reports on the 25¢ Flag that came without a UV check on which type was meant. It turns out that this hard-nosed approach was sensible. One cannot simply report on Plates 1 and 9 without knowing what type of tagging was used.]

One problem with looking at data from such a long series is that there can be a time bias depending on the number of stamps sorted and reported during different periods. With that in mind, I have listed the numbers in their approximate order of appearance rather than in strict numerical order. [Editor's note: At the author's request, they have been arranged approximately by earliest report to TPN. Mr. Iams said: "I realize that this ordering of the Yosemite is a bit awkward, but I wanted to list them in a way that stamps issued in the same time frame could be easily compared."]

I only have CL going back to March 1991, so I cannot create CL totals for this issue. Instead, Table 3 uses dealers' prices along with the percentages of various mixes that I have sorted for comparison with the TPN data.

The dealers whose prices were used were Michael Lipson, Jim Adams, and Bob Reece (the only reason other dealers' lists were not used was because I lacked a current list).

Quite a few discrepancies can be seen. None of the data supports the low Mix percentages for 2B and 3B or the low TPN percentage for 7P. The TPN percentages for 8B and possibly for 15P look a little low. There are also big differences in the TPN and Mix percentages for 5P, 9P, and 10P, but it is difficult to say which is closer to correct.

Plate 6P appears to be overpriced and the other data offer no clue as to why a slight premium should be charged for 7P (remember, we are talking about used, and not mint). On the other hand, both sets of sorting data suggest that 2P and 3P may be underpriced. *Linn's* "Trends" prices 2P and 3P as two of the cheapest 25¢ Flags, but "Trends" cannot be relied on since it also puts 15P in that same group (in fact, *Linn's* prices the overabundant "F" stamp with the numbers 2222 at twice the price of 15P). □

TPN's incidence reports have been updated to include reports from Thomas Malek, Carl Ditsch, Gary Wulfsberg, Dick Koenig, and Iams. Koenig and Ditsch appeared in *Coil Line*. Malek reports to both journals.

Table 3
Incidence of 25¢ Flags

Plate	TPN	Mix	Price
1B	.54%	.83%	\$3.33
2B	4.6%	.99%	\$0.50
3B	4.1%	1.32%	\$0.50
4B	5.1%	5.5%	\$0.50
6P	1.64%	1.66%	\$5.33
7B	5.1%	8.1%	\$0.67
5B	6.8%	5.0%	\$0.48
8B	3.3%	6.5%	\$0.48
8P	3.0%	3.8%	\$1.00
9P	20.0%	12.4%	\$0.50
9B	1.66%	2.3%	\$1.42
5P	2.2%	4.5%	\$0.75
7P	1.49%	10.6%	\$0.50
10P	12.0%	6.8%	\$0.50
11P	9.8%	7.3%	\$0.50
13P	7.7%	10.3%	\$0.47
2P	1.05%	2.5%	\$0.58
3P	.98%	1.66%	\$0.58
14P	8.2%	6.3%	\$0.47
1P	.20%	.33%	\$15.00
15P	.37%	1.49%	\$1.83
Total	7.828	604	

Incidence of 25¢ Flags
(Latest figures to TPN)

Plate	Actual #	Actual %
1	47	0.55%
11	19	0.22%
2	368	4.34%
21	99	1.17%
3	329	3.88%
31	88	1.04%
4	436	5.14%
5	562	6.62%
51	202	2.38%
61	140	1.65%
7	450	5.30%
71	183	2.16%
8	301	3.55%
81	264	3.11%
9	144	1.70%
91	1649	19.43%
101	980	11.55%
111	816	9.62%
131	672	7.92%
141	696	8.20%
151	41	0.48%
Totals:	8,486	100%

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Plate and mat varieties—Part XLII

By A.S. Cibulskas

- 1¢ Omnibus**
- a. Plate 23, B Press, tagged. Horizontal dash, about 1.5mm long, under the second "8" of the date and even with the top of "USA." Constant at 5R. (Le Duc)
- 7.1¢ Tractor**
- a. Plate 1, precanceled "ZIP+4." Inking variety: the wording "5-Digit ZIP+4" is in the maroon color of the stamp design as opposed to the normal blank ink. Several used singles were submitted. (Baer)
- 13.2¢ Coal Car**
- a. Plate 1. Wedge under the left wheel. Constant at 10L. (SAdams)
- 29¢ White House**
- a. Plate 3. Extraneous ink blob extends the bottom left lop of the plate number about 1mm to the left. Constant at 1L. (SAdams)
 - b. Plate 3. Dot just outside the lower left corner of the design area. Constant at 1R. (SAdams)
 - c. Plate 4. Inking variety: the numeral "1" of both dates is missing, although faint traces are present under microscopic examination. Several rolls submitted. (Hamrick)

Tagging, plate numbers, and perforation varieties of Great Americans Series

Scott	Stamp	L/block	L/Overall	Harrow/block	Harrow/overall	Harrow/phosphored	Harrow/untagged
1844	1¢ Dix	L (1, 2)		A (1)			
2169	2¢ Mary Lyon			E (1, 2)			E (?) Error
2171	4¢ Flanagan			E (1)			E (1) Intentionally
2173	5¢ Muñoz Marin				E (1)†		E (2) Intentionally
2176	10¢ Red Cloud			E (1)	E (1, 2)†	E (2)£	E (2?) Intentionally
2178	15¢ Cody			E (1, 3)	E (1, 2*†, 3†)	E (1)	
1862	20¢ Truman	L (1)		E (2)	E (3)†		
1863	22¢ Audubon	L (1)		E (3)			
2192	23¢ Cassatt			E (1)	E (1*, 2†)	E (2)£	E (?) Error
2183a	25¢ London \$5 book			E (1, 2)☆			
2183a	25¢ London books ☆						
1864	30¢ Laubach	L (1)		E (2)	E (2)†		
1867	39¢ Clark	L (1)		E (2)			
1868	40¢ Gilbreth	L (1)		E (2)			
2186	40¢ Chenaault				E (1)†	E (2)	
2188	45¢ Cushing			E (1)	E (1)†		
1869	50¢ Nimitz		L* (1,2,3,4)	E (1, 2)	E (2, 3*)		E (?) Error
2194A	\$1 Hopkins			E (1)	E (1)	E (1µ, 2)	E (?) Error
2196	\$5 Harte			E (1)		E (2)£	

Symbols used in this chart:

L = L-perforator 10.9 x 10.9 E = Eureka off-press bull's-eye 11.2 x 11.2 A = A Press in-line bull's eye 11.2 x 11.2

☆ \$5 booklet only 11.2 x 11.2. The \$1.50 and \$3 (Plate 1) booklets are block tagged and perforated (10 x 9.8) in-line on Goebel booklet-making equipment

* Printed on an I-8 currency press. Tagged off press.

† Overall tagging in all selvage. † Untagged area in selvage. £ Lenz paper (solid tagging). µ Mottled prephosphoring.

Entries printed in *italics* indicate that there is doubt about the existence of these stamps.

Data first compiled for *Linn's World Stamp Almanac* by Wayne L. Youngblood. Updated by the PNC Study Group.

Tagging, plate numbers, and perforations of Great Americans known in only one version

Scott	Stamp	E-E/Coverall	Overall	L/block	L/Overall	Harrow/block	Harrow/overall	Harrow/phosphored	L/phosphored	Untagged
2168	1¢ Mitchell					E (1)				E Error
1845	2¢ Stravinsky	1,2,3,4,5,6								
1846	3¢ Clay	1,2								
2170	3¢ White			1,2,3						
1847	4¢ Schurz	1,2,3,4								
1848	5¢ Buck	1,2,3,4								
2172	5¢ Black				E (1,2)					E Error
1849	6¢ Lippmann			1						
1850	7¢ Baldwin			1						
1851	8¢ Knox			3,4,5,6*						
1852	9¢ Thayer			1						
1853	10¢ Russell			1						
1854	11¢ Partridge			2,3,4,5*						
1855	13¢ Crazy Horse	1,2,3,4								
1856	14¢ Lewis			1						
2177	14¢ Howe				E (1,2)					
1857	17¢ Carson	1,2,3,4,13,14,15,16								
2179	17¢ Lockwood				E (1,2)					
1858	18¢ Mason	1,2,3,4,5,6								
1859	19¢ Sequoyah	39529, 39530								
1860	20¢ Bunche	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,13								
1861	20¢ Gallaudet	1,2,5,6,8,9								
2180	21¢ Carlson				E (1)					
2183	25¢ London sheet				E (1,2)					
2184	28¢ Sitting Bull				E (1)					
2184A	29¢ Warren						S1, S2			
1865	35¢ Drew	1,2,3,4								
2185	35¢ Chavez							S1, S2		
1866	37¢ Millikan	1,2,3,4								
2190	52¢ Humphrey						1			
2161	56¢ Harvard				E (1)					
2192	65¢ Arnold				E (1)					
2193	75¢ Willie						1			
2194	\$1 Revel				E (1)					
2195	\$2 Bryan				E (2)					

Bold-faced stamps are obsolete. Design has been replaced.

Huge tagging shift causes untagged errors

By Alan Thomson

The 2¢ Lyon is not the only Great American issue to turn up as an untagged error.

Harry Mueggenburg of Carmichael, Calif., has found some of the same huge tagging shifts on the 1¢ Mitchell, the 5¢ Black, and some 50¢ Nimitz stamps.

The \$2 Bryan has also been found in this condition.

The untagged portions of Mueggenburg's panes is found at the top of the 1¢, 5¢, and 50¢ values and at the bottom of the 2¢. It extends across the entire width of the pane and is as much as 40mm tall. In each case, at least one full row of stamps is completely untagged.

The shift on the Mitchell stamp is quite revealing, because it shows narrow lines of tagging in the top selvage before the untagged area begins. It is from that pane that the 40mm height was measured. The top row of stamps is without block tagging and the second row has only the upper half or a tagging block in the lower half of the stamp. The lower half extends into the third row of stamps.

Tagging breaks found from D Press

By Alan Thomson

Tagging breaks do exist on overall-tagged sheet stamps.

While checking a pane of 15¢ Cody stamps in a local post office, my UV light revealed a crisply defined 3mm wide untagged stripe right through the middle of the bottom row of stamps. The stripe extends completely across the pane and is very clean cut.

This example is from Plate 2, which was printed on the D Press, and thus displays the single break in the flexographic plate used for overall tagging on that press.

More and more Great American definitives are being printed or reprinted on the C or D presses, and if overall tagging is used, there is a possibility of a tagging break.

I view with suspicion any claims that true tagging breaks exist on Great American panes printed on the A Press. If Charles Yeager is correct in stating that the A Press used only a cylinder-mounted



At first, the size of the untagged area is puzzling because the horizontal gutter between panes is usually thought to be about 8mm wide, and the finished selvage, after cutting, approximates 4mm.

There is an answer, however.

All the stamps that thus far have exhibited this shift were printed on the A Press, and they were printed after the A Press bases were reformatted to sleeves of 800 subjects.

In Ken Lawrence's *Linn's Plate Number Coil Handbook*, there is a photograph on Page 287 that shows part of a sheet of Jack London stamps. As the caption states, that stamp was the first line-engraved definitive stamp to be printed on the A Press from an 800-subject sleeve. What that half sheet (four panes) shows is

jacket to produce overall tagging, no break would be possible. (See *U.S. Specialist*, February 1991.) The jacket is a solid sheath with no open seam.

It behooves us to know which plate number of each issue was printed on which press. It makes a difference.

[TPN note: One of the reasons we began the study of the Great Americans Series is because of its similar printing history to the printing history of PNCs.

[With that in mind, collectors should also be looking for the sorts of tagging breaks we have found on unprecanceled PNCs printed on the Cottrell presses after the fire that destroyed two of the four presses.

[At that time, BEP printers improvised to create small tagging mats by "shaving" the precancels off some precancel mats. The spaces between the mats caused tagging breaks on PNCs.

[We do not know, however, whether the same thing occurred with the Great Americans, which were printed in panes of 100 as opposed to the 18x24 arrangement for PNCs.

[It is quite possible that the tagging mats for the Great Americans survived the fire. In that event, no Cottrell tagging breaks would exist.] □

extremely wide horizontal gutters between panes. I would estimate them to be about 1 1/2 inches or nearly 40mm. This doesn't explain the tagging shift, but does establish the existence of a very wide gutter where no block tagging was intended.

The shift appears to be like so many other, except for its size. Its cause was probably plain misalignment. It was not the result of tagging cylinder reversal, which would have made no difference because the cylinder jacket with raised tagging blocks was essentially symmetrical. One has to wonder if anyone was monitoring the synchronization of the tagging and the printing at all. Most block-tagging shifts amount to a few millimeters, not almost 37. Apparently the known shift on the \$2 Bryan stamp is much larger. Remember, this is not one instance, but five that we know of at this point.

All five of these untagged stamps are errors. The 2¢ Lyon could be reprinted and issued untagged. The other two low values will not. Of course, if the Lyon error is saved with its adjoining tagged specimens, its error status would be preserved.

For those keeping track of the plate numbers, the Lyon example is from a lower right pane from Plate 1; the Black is from an upper left pane from Plate 2; the Nimitz is from an upper left pane from Plate 2. The plate number and the position of the Mitchell stamp are unknown at this time.

I encourage all who are interested in the Great Americans series to use their short-wave UV light on every pane or block they encounter. You just don't know what you'll find. □

About the charts

We have removed a notation in the chart that the 5¢ Muñoz Marin exists untagged from Plate 1. Only Plate 2 is untagged.

We have also removed a notation that the \$1 Hopkins exists on prephosphored paper from Plate 1. Although there are no untagged areas in the margin and although the overall tagging appears mottled, Plate 1 is known only block tagged or overall tagged. Plate 2 is on prephosphored paper.

We have also removed the notation for an overall-tagged 4¢ Flanagan. Obviously the report to TPN that such a stamp exists was in error.

We need help in ascertaining plate numbers of Great Americans printed before 1982. □

**Please check the changes
in the Great American
charts in "Update."**

It wasn't just Hurricane Andrew that fouled things up

Continued from Page 113
white CRT (cathode ray tube) screen.

They were having trouble programming the thing; I believe they had been working on it all day, and it was not responding the way they were told to expect. The woman said they were anticipating a First-Day crowd the next morning, and did not sound confident that it would be operating by 8:00 a.m. She said the PMCs at the three other post offices would not be working by Friday (as announced) and that one of the PMCs had yet to be uncrated.

I did not want to bother them, so I looked at the philatelic display for a while, trying to decide whether I should take a chance that they would be ready in the morning and spend \$35-\$40 to spend the night in Miami. I had an appointment for Friday afternoon, and would have to leave Miami no later than 10:00 a.m.

I walked past the PMC and the postal repair pair a final time. The door was open and a panel had been removed, revealing a bicolored coil of 3,000. It was dark and I didn't get as close as I would have liked, but it sure looked like the coil was backwards, with the stamps to be delivered top first (upside down?). No, I didn't ask if I

could get some blank stamps ... but it was tempting.

I left the post office disappointed, and opted to spend the night in West Palm Beach free instead (about an hour and half's drive north), unable to return the next day, I assumed I had made the right choice.

It would have been worse to have stayed overnight only to discover the next morning that they still were not on-line Friday morning.

A couple of days later, Hurricane Andrew tore through Dade County, and I heard on the radio that several Miami post offices had been destroyed. I have no idea if the stamps were ever available. Hell, the places I inspected might not even be there any more!

[TPN note: The PMC at the General Mail Facility did operate all day that Friday and the one at the Norland branch worked from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The other two Miami-area stations—the airport and Olympia Heights—that were to have a PMC did not have them available on Aug. 21.]

One last comment about UVM coils: If there had been any collectors involved with this project, one of their very first concerns would have been with PNCers

and how to accommodate their anticipated orders. Several PMCs could have been installed in the cave of the Philatelic Sales Division, or the devices could have been adapted to expedite printing strictly for philatelic uses. Maybe I am naive, but if collectors' interests were at heart in USPS, instead of an afterthought in USPS desire to market philatelic items and promote philatelic retention, perhaps our hobby would still be able to grow while still making a profit for our Postal Service. □

Lipson publishes label catalog

Michael Lipson, a Washington-area dealer, has published a catalog of PNC labels, a job originally begun by David E. Barrie-LaVergne, chairman of the PNC Study Group's Label Study Group.

Barrie-LaVergne, a government geologist, dropped out of sight a year ago.

The Lipson catalog does not price the labels, but illustrates them far beyond the work that Barrie-LaVergne began many years ago. He even incorporates some of Barrie-LaVergne's illustrations.

The \$3 catalog is a useful work for those who collect PNC labels. It can be ordered from Lipson at P.O. Box 2543, Reston, Va. 22091. □

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