

AN EDITORIAL

USPS MUZZLES PRINTERS, DENIES DATA TO COLLECTORS

You are being denied information by the Postal Service.

What kind of information? For starters, such fundamentals as plate size, type of press, or the plate-number interval on PNCs. Or the date and place of issue of new stamps.

But even more fundamentally, you are denied explanations of how things happened. To cite a recent example, we could not be told by American Bank Note Co. what really happened to the 19¢ Fishing Boat waste at Multi-Color Corp. ABN's spokesperson said: "I am directed to refer all questions to the Postal Service."

TPN tried desperately to tell you about the plate numbers on the 29¢ Jefferson stamp. We were blocked.

In some instances, you hear of stamps to be released only after they have been issued. To recall one infamous example: For the original 10¢ Eagle and Shields, the announcement was printed just two days before the first day. The philatelic press got the announcement after the stamp was issued. That made it tough for FDC collectors who want real (unofficial) first-day covers.

The FDC-maker, Artmaster, recently sent out this notice to dealers:

We recently sent out an order form ... about ... the Rock & Roll booklet, which we think is coming out June 14. Getting information from the Postal Service has been extremely difficult and it turns out that the earlier plans won't work. Apparently, the booklet pane of eight will not fit on a legal-size envelope (it's too long). (My emphases)

The blame for the paucity of information falls squarely on the Postal Service. In the distant past, we could ask stamp professionals in the Postal Service what you needed to know. They don't work there any more.

In the more recent past, we could ask the public relations offices at the printers for technical data you needed to know. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Stamp Venturers, and American Bank Note Co. were all helpful.

It was Richard Sennett's son-in-law, Robert Lane, who explained that the 29¢ Flower was being printed on a "Champlaign" Press (he insisted that the "g" was correct, but he was wrong) in 13 strips of 33.

Lane's wife, Sandra, provided all manner of data as we received sketchy, incomplete news releases from Postal Headquarters.

At BEP, Leah Akbar and Mary Halsell did their utmost to cut through the fog put up by the Postal Service.

And at American Bank Note Co., several helpful persons provided us with answers, including the mass of data we have published about the 10¢ Eagle and Shield stamps and the "G" stamp coils.

But all that is over. They can't talk any more. Some frightened bureaucrat at Postal Headquarters has ordered a blackout, or, to put it in another way, an unconstitutional prior restraint of your First Amendment rights

As Marc Fleming, the official spokesperson for Stamp Venturers, said after consulting a delegation of USPS officials who visited the Wisconsin offices of Banta Corp. where Fleming is stationed: "That information has to come from our customer, the Postal Service."

And the Postal Service either does not know or will not tell.

Once upon a time, we could call Jack Williams, manager of the Stamp Management Branch, to ask questions, or Linda Foster, who edited the plate-activity reports in the Stamps Division. Now, we must call an office termed "Corporate Relations." The employees in that office carry the title of "Product Publicity Specialists." Most stamp journalists believe that not a soul among them knows anything about stamps and cannot understand why we ask so many questions.

They have to ask others about what we want to know. They even ask us questions they should know the answers to. When we sought to find out just what low values were to be left untagged after the 10¢ Columbian was left untagged, we were asked: "What is tagging?"

They try hard, but we don't get the answers you need.

What on earth is so secret about the way the Postal Service prints stamps? Why can we not be told? And why can't we have stamp people to answer stamp questions in what should properly be called the Public Information Office, not "Corporate Relations."

Who is behind this unconstitutional news blackout? And why is it being done?

Stephen G. Eszari

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LETTERS: *Paper specifications are not considered confidential info*

In response to your Freedom of Information request sent to the U.S. Postal Service on March 16, 1993, Mr. Runyon asked that my office respond with the information you requested and to prepare this package for your use.

Enclosed, please find two documents: the relevant section of our 1986 stamp contract that included the old paper requirements and our paper specification, USPS-P-1191, Paper, Stamp, issued May 24, 1991. Prior to that date, the Postal Service did not have stamp paper requirements in specification format.

As I understand it, neither set of requirements is considered to be confidential information by the Postal Service. We are releasing this information to you and hope this is what you are looking for. I apologize that you went through the various inquiries before you got the right materials.

Michael F. Spates, Manager
Stamp Acquisition and Distribution

So many stamps, such big profits!

Twenty or so years ago, plate-block collecting was very popular. Then the USPS (or USPOD) decided to expand things so that it required six, eight, ten, or even more stamps to make up a "plate block." As a result, the specialized hobbyist threw up his hands in disgust and abandoned plate-block collecting.

It's not convenient to have to try to mount a full sheet of 50 to have a plate block. Of course USPS was happy about it, as collectors would now be required to salt away a larger number of stamps for their collections, which meant more profits from the sale of stamps that would never see use as postage—gee! I thought that was the primary reason for issuance: postage.

Now we're seeing an alarming trend in PNCs, unfortunately, and I fear the worst from the standpoint of collectors. Already we've had at least 25 different numbers on the Eagle and Shield stamp, and Heaven only knows how many more will be forthcoming. It's getting to the ridiculous stage now.

Then there are the Transportation stamps, with their many numbers, only to be reprinted on phosphored paper, or by two or more firms using the same design but different colors and methods, tagging gaps and/or varieties, unannounced "first days" of reprints, etc., all of which gets to be a chore instead of fun. In some instances it gets to be pretty darned expensive as well, especially when a person forks over a sizable amount for a particular plate number in supposedly small quantities, only to find out later have amazingly been "discovered" by a fortunate dealer or two. When the price takes a dramatic drop because of these

The Plate Number

and Great Americans Review

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newly discovered quantities, does the collector get a refund? Sure he does, in dreams only.

[*In reply:* Not so. Some new-issues dealers offered to take back the high-priced items for any reason (including lower prices later). One dealer's new-issues sales slips say: "If you do not want any of these, send them back." No time limit is stated. The writer of this letter has, in fact, returned stamps to that dealer for full credit. Some other dealers also made such offers, especially on E&S A32333 and A43334. Dealers are not crooks.]

From the dealer's standpoint, all is well, and the more the merrier, as it means more sales and, therefore, more profits. But it isn't all peaches and cream for the dealer, either, as he must buy full rolls (presumably) in order to cull out the saleable PNCs and then dispose of the gigantic amount of unsalable remainders, which I'm sure he dumps at an attractive discount to someone who can use them, and thereby save a little bit of postage for his own firm. Nothing wrong with that.

[*In reply:* The writer does not really understand the PNC marketplace. In the past several years, most PNC dealers have forgone the chase after new numbers, the purchase of rolls of up to 10,000 stamps, and the disposal of waste. Instead, they have turned more and more to wholesalers, who spend a small fortune in phone calls to find the new numbers, obtain them, strip out the numbered strips, and dispose of the waste. The most successful of these wholesalers in finding new numbers has been Dr. Robert Rabinowitz, who was the first to find more than a dozen of the E&S numbers. The one number he could not find has never been found. Collectors who seek completeness, owe Dr. Rabinowitz a word of thanks for his herculean efforts.]

The critical point of all this is that sooner or later we're going to find swarms of PNC collectors abandoning the specialty, as they become overwhelmed by the quantities coming from a half dozen or more printers, each of whose production will show slight differences and, therefore, collectible varieties. As the number of collectors dwindle, the volume of sales also dwindles, and the dealer is going to be left holding the bag.

In my judgment, something must be done to control the flood of issues. I cannot see any valid reasoning for the USPS to farm out its printing orders to private firms. If the BEP cannot produce what's needed, why can't the BEP be

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 Eszati.

updated so it can? The more private printing firms that are involved, the more varieties, errors, early releases, unauthorized releases, etc., are going to occur—and the more collectors who will become disenchanted.

Enough is enough. PNC collecting is still an attractive specialty. Let's keep it that way.

George E. Kuhn
Fruitland Park, Fla.

What the heck is this?

I had to tell someone this, so you're elected. A while back I saw something queer on a precanceled 8.5¢ Tow Truck. It appeared to be a blemish or smirch, possibly a natural inclusion. Under magnification it appeared as a "15" with a shortened "1." This was above the usual position of the plate number, between the two tires and just slightly to the right of where the plate number should be.

I call it the "Hidden Unknown Plate Number." Would you want to see such a ridiculous thing?

R.N. Nelson
Decatur, Ill.

In reply: Certainly!

(Nelson did send it in, and it was a paper inclusion.)

Railroad tracks again

I acquired a partial roll of 4¢ Stagecoach, Plate 1 and 2, and while looking for a tagging break, I noticed two untagged lines similar to precancel lines. This is on all my stamps from a roll that originally had 500 stamps.

I have never seen this variety for sale or listed anywhere. I do not know what caused it or just what it should be called. Can you help?

Joe B. Knight
New Bern, N.C.

In reply: What you have found is as old as PNCs. Larry G. Haynes once dubbed it "railroad tracks."

Here's what happened: The precancel mat on one of the old Cottrell presses that was used for both precancels and tagged stamps (before the BEP fire that destroyed two Cottrell presses) wore out the pressure roller against which it was run. When the precancel mat was removed later and replaced by a tagging mat, the pressure where the precancel lines had been was insufficient, with the result that the tagging was omitted on the worn-out part of the pressure roller. The phenomenon can also be seen on the 20¢ Flag and 11¢ Caboose, which were printed on the B Press. There, the 11¢ Caboose shows the shape of the 20¢ Flag when viewed under UV light.

We never gave these Caboose freaks a name, but "railroad tracks" would seem to fit for the Cottrell stamps.

What happened to the UVMs?

Did you notice that the current edition of the *Stamps, etc.* slicko mag from the USPS does not even mention the ECA-GARD variable-rate coil? My last order for five PNC strips of this one has been on back order for the last three months. I fear for its very existence. The check was cashed, of course. That's one hell of a way to run a business. Maybe a letter to Mr. Runyon would help clear up this continuing mud-

Pedro's World of PNCs

by Pedro Ortegón, M.D.



"And don't come to another game of five-card stud until you learn that an A32333 beats an A33334!"

dle at Kansas City.

Dick Koenig
Tucson, Ariz.

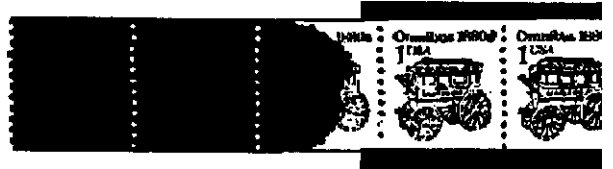
In reply: By the time you read this, you may have received the new, improved, shiny gum ECA-GARD stamps. That's what the cave has been shipping.

As to the cashing of your check, readers who charge their purchases by credit card have found that if USPS doesn't deliver, they can complain to their credit-card companies to have the charges taken off.

Big red smear covers stamps

Do you have any ideas of what this is? I found it at the end of a roll of untagged 1¢ Omnibus.

Edward D. Gould
Roscommon, Mich.



In reply: The red ink covering the left edge of this strip was applied by the pressmen to tag the roll for destruction because of some problem during printing. The right side of the strip appears soiled and mangled. That may have been why the pressmen wanted the stamps destroyed.

Is there a phosphored 15¢ Cody?

I'm not convinced that the 15¢ Cody was not issued on prephosphored paper. I have a lower left plate block from Plate 1 with tagged margins, in which the inked portions

of the design are considerably brighter in UV than the inked portions of an overall-tagged plate block from Plate 1 with untagged margins. This is what one might expect if the tagging were under the ink rather than on top of it.

Robert L. Kugel
Norwalk, Conn.

In reply: Wayne Youngblood examined a Detroit-area reader's alleged prephosphored Codys at the PNC³ regional meeting at the Plymouth Show. His finding: Overall tagged.

He continues to say he has never seen a prephosphored Cody.

The doubled 5 was the second double

In the May issue you reported a used single of the E&S A43335 sent in by Howard Moser with a doubled 5, and you asked if anyone has seen anything like it. See Page 91 of the September 1992 issue, in which I reported a doubling of the 3 on A22113. The doubling on my strips is not as dramatic as the one illustrated in the May issue.

Doug Iams
San Jose, Calif.

Numbers on roll seals

I have just received two rolls of the 19¢ Fishing Boat with the numbers A5556. I noticed that the small white tape holding the roll together inside the shrink wrap had a

number. One roll was marked "245," the other "320."

Do these have any significance?

Dick Koenig
Tucson, Ariz.

In reply: Before American Bank Note Co. was stopped from answering reporters' questions, *TPN* was told that the numbers represent one set going through the coiling machinery. On small rolls, which are printed 19 across, all 19 rolls get the same number. On large rolls, which are printed 20 across, all 20 rolls get the same number.

It's an internal control measure which was started recently. That explains why not all Fishing Boats have the.

Some Rushmores are hard to find

I've been tracking the reports of finds of used Rushmores and White House issues in *Coil Line* and the *Coil Line* percentages are very similar to the *TPN* percentages. There has been less of a regional bias in the *Coil Line* reports recently than there had been in the past, so the percentages should give a good indication of what is being found.

There has been plenty of time by now for quantities of Rushmores from Plates 5, 8, and 9 to show up, if they are out there, but their reported quantities remain low. The 9s were reported to have had a fairly wide distribution, but evidently it was wide but not deep.

Ken Lawrence was correct when he noted that stamps issued in the large roll sizes get used just like any other stamps, but he may have missed a point. He correctly pointed out that stamps from different roll sizes are used by different groups of mailers and that typical recipients are also divided into different groups. The question is whether the different recipient groups supply the collecting world in equal percentages of what they receive. It is entirely possible that one group supplies a larger or smaller percentage of what it receives, which would mean the roll size associated with that group would be over- or underrepresented.

Take a look at the White House and Rushmore issues. The only White House that appears only on rolls larger than 100 is Plate 5 and it is the plate with the lowest percentage in the *TPN* White House table. The Rushmores that appear only in roll sizes greater than 100 are Plates 2, 5, 6, 8, A11111, and A22211, and all of them were available in lower quantities than the numbers that were available in rolls of 100 with the exception of Plate 9.

Since we have no printing data on the Rushmores or White House, no one can say whether the low reports for the plates from the larger rolls is due to low printing quantities or due to their roll size. But the fact remains that they have been reported in lower quantities.

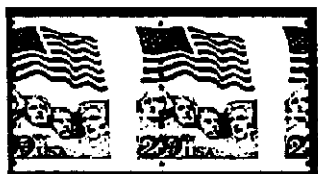
Doug Iams
San Jose, Calif.

Denson wrong on Plate 3 Sleights

Ed Denson's article in *TPN* was interesting, but he's way off base.

• Other dealers don't seem to be having any trouble sup-

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plying Plate 3 of the 5.2¢ Sleigh.

• If the supplies have truly dried up the prospective asking price in the next several years should be in the \$500 range instead of the paltry \$230–\$310 prediction he makes for this spring.

In my estimation, the price of 5.2T3 might well go to equal that dastardly 20¢ Fire Pumper Plate 2 which is four times as high for a strip of five than a strip of three. Can the price imbalance for the 5.2¢ be far behind in this sort of imbalance?

George Kuhn
Fruitland Park, Fla.

What paper is used for what?

I think I will stick with my theory that whichever roll of paper is closest to the press is the one used. The new paper specs will apply—except when they don't.

Two different offset/intaglio papers, same stamp

The May issue was a delight, especially the piece on the paper specs. I am glad things will be easier, or will they?

Enclosed is a photocopy of a pane of 20 of the 29¢ Cherokee Strip with the plate numbers "A4/4444." It is overall tagged and has a vertical untagged stripe running through the first column of stamps.

But on panes with the numbers "A2/2222" and "A5/4444" the stamps are on mottled prephosphored paper. The three sheets also show different UV colors in short- and long-wave.

In reply: Thank you, thank you, thank you. It is reader input like yours that helps clear up what we do not know.

As you will see on Page 92 of this issue, BEP could not get by with just three papers. It still breaks them down by roll



USPS correct on intaglio colors

In "The tale of the two roosters," the Postal Service was correct when it reported that two intaglio colors (PMS 1795) and (PMS 485) were used to print the 29¢ Happy New Year Stamp even though only one intaglio plate number is seen in the selvage, a spokesperson for American Bank Note Co. said.

The press used can print up to three intaglio colors on the same plate, ABN told *TPN*.

She explained that the inking pad dips into the ink and places it on the proper place on the plate.

The stamps were originally printed in one offset run and one intaglio run. But when the stamps were tested for phosphor meter units (PMUs), they failed to emit enough phosphorescence to activate facer-cancelers.

ABN asked the Postal Service for per-

size and by the printing process to be used. Our source in the May issue, Dr. Alim Fatah, may not have intended for us to interpret his remarks as we did. In any event, there are more than three papers under the new specs. See the article on Page 92 of this issue.

Specifically, the Cherokee Strip stamps were printed on two different ones: offset/untagged and offset/prephosphored. The offset/untagged paper was overall tagged on press, leaving the tagging break, which is probably the edge of the tagging roller.

Gum Breakers on 17¢ Carson

On many of my blocks from Plates 15 and 16 of the 17¢ Carson, there are gum breakers, many of which are hard to see. They show up best in the margins.

The tagging, by the way, on Plates 15 and 16 is not at all as it should be on overall tagging, but only in small areas of the two leftmost columns of stamps.

In reply: Plates 15 and 16 were printed on Press 803, as proven by the fact that some of them show tagging breaks. The poor tagging may be the result of that.

You are fortunate in having duplicate copies of these plate numbers. They carry a premium.

Overall tagged \$1 Hopkins

My overall-tagged \$1 Hopkins does not have an untagged margin. But it does have two tones in the selvage, like when you roll paint on a wall and overlap a seam.

In reply: We have given up our belief that there were no overall-tagged Hopkinses. But we would still like to see one with an untagged selvage. Since they were printed in panes of 20, we don't know where that could be.

Carol Morehouse
Carlsbad, Calif.

Multi-Color did not improperly dispose of coil waste; Rooster's later tagging was all in one offset-press run

mission to add a tagging block. Permission was given, and the stamps that had already been produced were run through the offset press a second time, when a tagging block was printed on top of the intaglio. Those early stamps, which have turned out difficult to find, show some reflection on top of the intaglio feathers, caused by the lacquer in which the tagging is suspended.

Later, a tagging station was added to the six-color offset press for the sake of efficiency. The stamps printed like that have the intaglio on top and the color appears mat when viewed at an angle against a light.

The offset-over-intaglio stamps have been found only with intaglio plate numbers 2 and 3. Further reports are welcome.

We got it wrong on Multi-Color, but ABN is barred from telling us why

In the May issue we carried a report of the finding in a dumpster of imperforate coil waste from 19¢ Fishing Boats.

In the story, "The perils of dumpster diving," we said Multi-Color Corp., the subcontractor that printed the stamps for American Bank Note Co., had improperly disposed of the waste.

A spokesperson for ABN told *TPN* the story was wrong, as we sort of suspected because Multi-Color is a security printer and cannot simply dispose of accountable paper by tossing it in a dumpster.

"I know the whole story, and can straighten you out," *TPN* was told by an ABN spokesperson, "but I have to clear it with the Postal Service."

And then the gag rule went out. Our contact was unable to "straighten us out."

From *Linn's* we learned that Ted Zaiter of Multi-Color had said that the waste was incinerated in Indianapolis with representatives of Multi-Color and the Postal Service witnessing the destruction.

We were also wrong about Multi-Color when we said it was no longer printing stamps for ABN. It is still printing booklets.

Youngblood solves paper puzzle

By Stephen G. Esrati

Wayne L. Youngblood, a member of the PNC Study Group and editor of *Scott Stamp Monthly*, presented his tagging slide show at the regional meeting of the Plate Number Coil Collectors Club (PNC³) at the Plymouth Show in Plymouth, Mich., in late April.

Near the front of the room Youngblood had set up Alfred "Tag" Boerger's old UV display case, in which stamps could be viewed in ordinary as well as UV light.

In this exhibit he had two stamps that had been damaged when they went through the facer-canceler.

- On a 29¢ Tulip—which is printed on the solidly prephosphored paper we have been calling Lenz paper—the skinned area showed up untagged under the UV light.

- On a 29¢ Flag over Mt. Rushmore—which was printed on mottled prephosphored paper—the skinned area continued to glow brightly.

Youngblood's conclusion from this is that mottled paper is prephosphored by having the phosphors in the paper mash and that Lenz paper is coated with phosphors after the paper dries.

Our terminology

The business of prephosphored papers, which has been a bone of contention among members of the study group for more than a year, now needs some simple terms to describe the two types of paper.

Fishing Boat printed on wrong paper

'Garbage collector' finds untagged gold

Cam Wolff—who calls herself a "garbage collector"—sat through Wayne Youngblood's slide lecture at the Plymouth (Mich.) Show on April 24 and heard him say that "virtually all tagged stamps exist as untagged errors except stamps printed on prephosphored papers—except one."

The exception, Youngblood said, was the 19¢ Fishing Boat with the numbers "A5555." That strip, he said, was printed accidentally on untagged paper intended for the 10¢ undenominated Eagle and Shield (see box on opposite page).

After the meeting broke up, Ms. Wolff showed a group of collectors some of the treasures she had found in post office trash cans, including a postal card with a Fishing Boat bearing the numbers "A5555," that was canceled by a carrier's four-bar obliterator.

She had donated the card to PNC³ as a door prize, but nobody chose it, and she recovered it. Ron Maifeld spotted the cancel (which indicates that the stamp had not gone through a facer-canceler and often signals the presence of an untagged stamp). He borrowed Joann Lenz's UV lamp to check it. It was the untagged error.

But the card was even better than that. It bore a computerized change-of-address label applied and dated (March 4, 1993). That would be an earliest known use (although the exact date of mailing in February remained unknown).

The card had been mailed in Livonia (the town next to Plymouth) and a rush immediately began to the USPS booth at the show, hoping to find remnants of the roll.

And there they were! Joann Lenz obtained remnants of a roll of 500 at face from the USPS booth at the Plymouth Show.

In subsequent days, collectors checked all Detroit-area post offices, turning up a handful of other rolls of 500.

Ms. Wolff's find of the untagged error was not the first. A day or

Lenz paper is surface coated
Mottled paper is through and through

As you will see on Page 84 of the July 1992 issue of *TPN*, we called both paper prephosphored then and did not take a stand as to when the phosphoring was done.

Since then, we have fudged by calling one paper Lenz paper and the other mottled.

Although mottled exactly describes what we see, we cannot expect that everyone from now until eternity will know that Lenz paper was named for Joann Lenz, who first noticed it on Plate 6 of the Rushmores.

Further, although she may feel some pride in becoming part of stamp history through her discovery, Mrs. Lenz appears a bit uneasy about references to "her" paper.

It is, therefore, necessary to come up with two terms that still exactly describe what we see without having to know anything about how the paper is made.

The *TPN* usage from now will be:

29F6—Plate 6 of the Flag over Mt. Rushmore on mottled prephosphored paper.

29F6I—Plate 6 of the Flag over Mt. Rushmore on solid prephosphored paper.

□

so after the PNC³ regional meeting, PNC³'s *Coil Line* for May arrived with an ad from Dr. Jerry Miller in South Carolina offering untagged strips of five for \$25. He sold single stamps at \$1.50.

Dr. Miller said he found them around the last week of March after having bought two strips in a post office and having noticed that they were untagged.

When *TPN* called him, Dr. Miller limited quantities to two strips, saying: "I'm a member of the PNC Club, and I want to give as many of them a chance to get them."

But before he imposed his limit, Dr. Miller had sold more than \$920 worth (18 numbered strips and 322 singles) to Bruce Menia of upstate New York. (It was Menia who had provided Youngblood with samples of the stamp, spurring the flurry of activity in the Detroit area.)

Menia said Dr. Miller had told him that Menia had bought out all that was left of Dr. Miller's first find. But Dr. Miller subsequently found more, eventually offering Menia and Frank Marrelli rolls at \$1,100. He offered rolls to other dealers at \$1,000, but the price appeared to be negotiable.

What's more, Dr. Miller charged Marrelli \$35 a strip for four strips, \$10 above his own retail price. Marrelli, a wholesaler, later withdrew the four strips, saying "They're being found all over."

Menia subsequently resold most of his strips to a dealer. He had seven strips left at a regional meeting of PNC³ at Boxborough, Mass., where he was offered as much as \$80 a strip by eager buyers. He sold them at \$50.

Withdrawal of stocks is denied by USPS

Later, when a friend of Menia's tried to obtain more stamps from Dr. Miller, Dr. Miller said he had none left, Menia said. The friend, Menia said, then attempted to obtain them from post

offices in Dr. Miller's area, but was told that all rolls of the 19¢ Fishing Boat had been withdrawn from sale.

[Denis Fuller, a South Carolina dealer, said it was unlikely that any post office except the main station in Columbia, S.C., Dr. Miller's home town, would have had any coils of 500 of the Fishing Boat in the first place. He said the other stations never carried rolls of 500.]

TPN also was told that an accountable paper clerk in Detroit had been ordered by Postal Headquarters in Washington to check for untagged rolls and to destroy them.

A call to James Tolbert, head of the USPS Stamp Management Branch, resulted in a promise to check and call back. The callback came from Robin Minard of the Corporate Relations Department.

"We have no knowledge of this happening," Minard said. "We have not heard of the stamp, and until we do, we have to treat it as a rumor, although I know that *Linn's* is going to have a story about this. Can you send us a sample? We'd like to find out how you can tell an untagged stamp from a tagged one."

TPN supplied Minard, and presumably Tolbert, with an untagged example, as well as a sample of tagged stamps from a roll with the same plate number, suggesting that they go downstairs to the philatelic store in Postal Headquarters to use its UV lamp, if it has been replaced after a theft last year.

Minard later acknowledged the existence of the stamps, saying they were a mistake, printed on the wrong paper. She said ABN estimated that a total of 8,843 rolls had been printed. That means some 175,000 numbered strips could exist.

[Since all strips that could exist are seldom found for collectors, this total should be compared to Eagle and Shield A32333 (289,541 maximum PNCs) or A33334 (375,117 maximum PNCs).]

In the middle of May, Dr. Robert Rabinowitz found a supply of the stamps, bringing the retail price down to \$12 for a VF-XF strip of five.

The site of his find was not known, but previous finds had been made in South Carolina, Florida, Michigan, Illinois, and Missouri.

How did the untagged error happen?

We had been told previously by ABN that Guilford Gravure was printing Eagle and Shields with the numbers A99999 when production was switched to the 19¢ Fishing Boat. At first, stamps with the numbers A5555 were printed. Then the black plate had to be replaced and the press run was completed using A5556. When the Fishing Boats were out of the way, E&S production resumed for A9999, but the blue plate had to be replaced. A rechromed Plate 8 was substituted, resulting in E&S A89999.

Could all that to-and-fro have caused the printing of Fishing Boats on E&S paper, we asked.

"No," was the reply from ABN. "We have controls in place where we check the paper before it goes on press. But we're checking on it."

Unfortunately, we could not learn from ABN what its inquiries may have uncovered. ABN (and all other printers) were muzzled during the first week of May. We asked USPS to explain how the Fishing Boats got to be printed on "essentially untagged" paper, as A.S. Cibulskas has termed them (See box above). But we only got an acknowledgment that the untagged stamps do exist and that they were caused by being printed on the wrong paper.

But, thanks to Alan Thomson of the PNC Study Group, we can say with certainty, that the untagged error was not caused by printing on untagged E&S paper.

The wide geographic distribution of the untagged error, would seem to indicate that it is possible that a whole roll of "essentially untagged" paper was printed with Fishing Boats.

To bolster that theory, it is known that the boxes in which the stamps were packed contain both tagged and untagged stamps. This indicates that Guilford was totally unaware of the fact that it had printed on wrong paper and was shipping them only by plate number.

But one of the problems with censorship is that the censor can never completely stop the truth from emerging. This time, it some-

Untagged Fishing Boats not on E&S paper; they're on unphosphored Fishing Boat paper (and they're not really untagged)

When Wayne Youngblood first spoke of the untagged 19¢ Fishing Boats, he said they had been erroneously printed on paper intended for the untagged 10¢ Eagle and Shields.

To prove it, Youngblood examined the stamps side-by-side under shortwave UV, and the stamps appeared the same.

Alan Thomson, however, did not accept that idea. "I think they were printed on a faulty web," he said.

"I took both types of E&S stamps and the untagged Fishing Boat and looked at them under longwave UV. I found I was looking at three different papers," Thomson said.

A different test was tried by TPN. We placed tagged and untagged Fishing Boats, both showing the numbers "A5555," under longwave UV. Under those conditions, the two strips were identical, whether seen from the gum side or the face.

The stamps were supposed to be printed on prephosphored paper. The tagged stamps are on prephosphored paper that is tagged solid, meaning that the paper is phosphor coated.

Thomson also said that Scott Adams had noticed that there are some traces of green phosphor on the untagged stamps. When TPN examined the stamps under 10-power magnification in shortwave UV, there were threadlike phosphorescent areas on the stamps.

[A.S. Cibulskas made comparisons to ABN's 23¢ USA stamps and found speckles of bright stuff on them, too; but they turned out to be high-bright inclusions, not phosphor crystals.]

Since we can no longer find out from ABN what its investigation found, we shall come up with a theory:

Thomson is correct. The stamps were printed on a paper on which the phosphor coating did not adhere for some reason or other, or in which the phosphor crystals were not properly suspended before coating.

Whether the stamps should be called untagged is now open to discussion. Cibulskas calls them "essentially untagged."

Meanwhile, we were told by Robin Minard of USPS that the results of ABN's internal investigation will not be distributed to the stamp-collecting public by the Postal Service.

how got to Youngblood, who reported it in *Flash*, the updating service of *Scott Stamp Monthly*.

When untagged Fishing Boat stamps were first located, there was much speculation as to their cause, since the stamps were printed on phosphor-coated paper. Because phosphor-coated paper has the phosphorescent coating applied by the paper producer, standard untagged errors are not possible.

Many collectors came to the conclusion that the stamps were printed on the wrong paper, perhaps that of the 10¢ Eagle and Shield.

Some time later it was discovered that, under magnification and ultraviolet light, microscopic flecks of taggant could be found on the stamps.

Scott submitted examples of the Fishing Boat stamps to American Bank Note Co., the contractor. ABN responded through the USPS and stated that the stamps were indeed printed on the wrong paper, an untagged stock. The microscopic flecks of taggant, it was surmised, originated on the press.

TPN does not agree with these conclusions, does not agree with the way the conclusions were censored, does not agree with the way the results of ABN's investigation were passed to one philatelic publication and not to others. In the meantime, we believe the stamps were printed on paper that was supposed to be prephosphored, which had a label saying it was prephosphored, but somehow was not phosphored.

Scott has given the stamp the number 2529b, making it a minor variety. □

Average dealers' prices on E&S stamps Updated to June 12, 1993

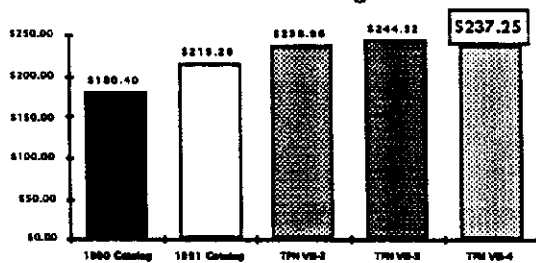
No	Last TPN	This TPN	Change	No	Last TPN	This TPN	Change
A11111	\$3.33	\$3.22	-3.30%	A43325	\$4.19	\$4.03	-3.82%
A11112	\$3.33	\$3.22	-3.30%	A43326	\$4.27	\$4.37	2.34%
A12213	\$22.13	\$21.58	-2.49%	A43334	\$3.56	\$3.48	-2.25%
A21112	\$3.33	\$3.22	-3.30%	A43335	\$3.52	\$3.48	-1.14%
A21113	\$5.00	\$4.80	-4.00%	A43426	\$5.21	\$5.19	-0.38%
A22112	\$3.33	\$3.22	-3.30%	A53335	\$4.23	\$4.23	0.00%
A22113	\$3.23	\$3.16	-2.17%	A54444	\$4.58	\$4.43	-3.28%
A32333	\$214.29	\$231.43	8.00%	A54445	\$4.58	\$4.43	-3.28%
A33333	\$5.86	\$5.62	-4.10%	A77777	\$3.43	\$3.23	-5.83%
A33334	\$98.00	\$94.89	-3.17%	A88888	\$3.36	\$3.11	-7.44%
A33335	\$5.19	\$5.00	-3.66%	A88889		\$4.25	
A34424	\$5.03	\$5.00	-0.60%	A89999		\$3.42	
A34426	\$5.03	\$4.91	-2.39%	A99999	\$3.50	\$3.13	-10.57%
A43324	\$5.29	\$5.14	-2.84%	S11111		\$3.46	
				S11111		\$3.25	

Notes to this table: Prices are taken from dealers' price lists and advertisements. Prices have not been adjusted for condition as they are for prices in the TPN Average.

S11111 starts off slightly higher than BEP's 11111 because it takes 33 stamps to obtain a plate number as opposed to 24 stamps.

S88889 was found around June 1 and is not yet widely distributed.

TPN Average



Price changes of strips in TPN Average

CATALOG	SERIES	FACE	PLATE	TPN VIII-3	TPN VIII-4	% Change
18F1	FLAG	18	1	\$513.67	\$499.15	-2.83%
18F3	FLAG	18	3	\$1,210.86	\$1,160.50	-4.16%
20F4	FLAG	20	4	\$938.26	\$887.46	-5.42%
20F11	FLAG	20	11	\$13.66	\$13.11	-4.04%
22F1	FLAG	22	1	\$16.92	\$16.36	-3.26%
22F3	FLAG	22	3	\$66.70	\$63.33	-5.05%
25F5	FLAG	25	5 Block	\$5.69	\$5.39	-5.25%
25F5i	FLAG	25	5 Photos	\$11.90	\$11.73	-1.45%
29F1	FLAG	29	1	\$5.85	\$5.58	-4.72%
29F1X	WH FLAG	29	1	\$5.80	\$5.52	-4.76%
5.2T3	TRANS	5.2	3	\$206.00	\$208.66	1.29%
5.2T4P	TRANS	5.2	4	\$17.71	\$17.33	-2.14%
5.9T3P	TRANS	5.9	3	\$31.36	\$31.60	0.77%
5.9T6P	TRANS	5.9	6	\$105.02	\$106.55	1.46%
7.4T2	TRANS	7.4	2	\$13.18	\$12.78	-3.05%
8.4T3P	TRANS	8.4	3	\$25.98	\$24.01	-7.57%
9.3T1P	TRANS	9.3	1	\$18.95	\$18.22	-3.88%
9.3T6	TRANS	9.3	6	\$324.04	\$325.33	0.40%
9.3T8P	TRANS	9.3	8	\$234.05	\$228.45	-2.39%
10.9T1P	TRANS	10.9	1	\$38.86	\$38.28	-1.48%
10.9T4P	TRANS	10.9	4	\$424.38	\$410.70	-3.22%
17T6	TRANS	17	6	\$21.52	\$20.47	-4.86%
17T6Pba	TRANS	17	6	\$57.30	\$55.78	-2.57%
18T1	TRANS	18	1	\$112.41	\$108.82	-3.19%
18T3	TRANS	18	3	\$90.83	\$88.35	-2.72%
18T17	TRANS	18	17	\$7.00	\$7.42	5.91%
20T1	TRANS	20	1	\$197.88	\$191.50	-3.23%
20T2	TRANS	20	2	\$1,098.54	\$1,061.92	-3.33%
20T7	TRANS	20	7	\$192.95	\$190.90	-1.06%
20T11	TRANS	20	11	\$106.54	\$104.78	-1.65%
20T12	TRANS	20	12	\$11.96	\$11.80	-1.34%
10U A33333P	E&S	10	33333	\$6.74	\$6.45	-4.10%
19M A1112	FISH	19	1112	\$12.16	\$11.06	-9.89%
19M A5555V1	FISH	19	Untagged	—	\$13.57	
29U 1211	F	29	1211	\$35.29	\$33.56	-4.92%
20M1	CONS	20	1	\$232.81	\$228.56	-1.82%
20M3	CONS	20	3	\$142.14	\$143.61	1.04%
20G1	OFFICIAL	20	1	\$74.18	\$71.76	-3.26%
22G1	OFFICIAL	22	1	\$91.57	\$94.19	2.85%

Untagged boats burn dealers

Editor's note: No matter what I do, the following sounds self-serving. But it's what happened.

By Stephen G. Esrati

Several PNC dealers got burned in the early rush to obtain the untagged 19¢ Fishing Boat with the numbers "A5555" (main story on Page 86). In the process, some collectors paid more for the strips than the price to which the strips eventually settled.

First, a collector, Bruce Menia, bought 18 numbered strips at \$25 from Dr. Jerry Miller, who sold at that price to members of PNC through an ad in the *May Coil Line*.

Dr. Miller kept finding more, but he charged as much as \$1,100 for a roll of 500 to one dealer and \$35 a strip to another. He also forced dealers to buy unwanted scrap to obtain numbered strips.

Menia resold his strips at up to \$50. One batch went to a dealer at \$40 a strip. But Menia was offered as much as \$80 at a PNC meeting in Massachusetts.

A.S. Cibulskas and I obtained our original supplies at modest cost from Detroit-area collectors. I did not have enough for all my new-issues customers and sent out post cards offering them at \$50, with a promise to buy them back or offer a rebate if my price should fall. Most of the new-issues subscribers agreed, cleaning me out.

Several of my new-issues customers obtained their strips elsewhere, either from Dr. Miller (at \$25) or from Menia (at prices up to \$50). In the *June Coil Line*, Dr. Miller went to \$50.

I paid a St. Louis collector \$250 a roll for additional stock, or \$2.50 per strip of five. I offered rolls at \$350 to two dealers but they declined.

Then Dr. Robert Rabinowitz found a supply, and shared the wholesaling with Al Haake. Their wholesale price determined a PS/S retail price in the \$10-\$15 range. My price dropped to \$12 net and a rebate letter went out.

Cibulskas, who also offered a rebate, dropped his price to \$12 from a \$15-\$25 range. Frank Marrelli, who had paid \$35 to Dr. Miller, withdrew his four strips, saying, "There's a million of them out there." Dr. Miller told one collector he would get a rebate to bring the price down to \$12. It is not known if Dr. Miller's rebates are automatic.

Rabinowitz makes expanded TPN Average tumble

The TPN Average tumbled this month, mainly because Dr. Robert Rabinowitz dropped prices as much as 40% while ending his 25% discounts for purchases of more than \$60. Other dealers followed to stay competitive.

When I started the average, dealers included Bob Dumaine, M&M Southwest, H&H Stamps, Vern Kraus, Dennis Chamberlain, Kim Cuniberti, and Tom Maeder. Later, I added Joe Lane and Rasdale Stamp Co., but in recent months, the number of dealers involved in all of PNC collecting has declined.

I had to drop Chamberlain as he sought to sell out. Cuniberti is retained only for pre-cancel gaps, although he continues to deal in other specialties. Rasdale has stopped publishing a PNC price list. I retained Tom Maeder only for his specialized listings of the 17¢ Auto. Others have left the PNC business. The number of dealers was getting so low that I feared that one dealer's change of price would disproportionately affect the average, as Dr. Rabinowitz's cuts did this month. I had to add new dealers.

So I asked Teresa Wajek of PNCs Unlimited, Ron Czaplicki, and Jim Adams to send their price lists. That brings the number of dealers back up to 14. Price lists from other dealers are welcome.

The untagged Fishing Boat has joined the TPN Average.

SPECIALS SPECIALS SPECIALS SPECIALS

All strips are F-VF and PNC5 unless otherwise noted.

1897 1c Omnibus #3, 4	SALE .69	2529 19c Fishing Boat #1111,2424	SALE 1.69
2225 1c Omnibus #2 Untag	SALE .34	#1212	SALE 2.49
1898 3c Handcar #1,2,3,4	SALE .59	#1112	SALE 6.49
2451 4c Steam C #1 Untag	SALE .69	2607 23c Flag P-S #111,212	SALE 2.09
2453 5c Canoe #2, 3	SALE 1.19	#122	SALE 3.29
2452 5c Circus W #A1, 2	SALE .99	2608 23c USA P-S #A1111,2222	SALE 2.59
2127A 7.1c Tractor Zip+4 #1	SALE 1.09	#1111 (BEP)	SALE 2.59
2128 8.3c Ambulance #1, 2	SALE 1.09	#S111	SALE 2.59
2457 10c Tractor #1	SALE .99	2280 25c Flag #1 Ph	SALE 33.99
2130A 10.1 Oil Wagon #3 Red	SALE 1.49	2518 29c "F" #1111,2222	SALE 2.99
2258 13c Patrol W #1	SALE 1.49	2523 29c Rushmore #5	SALE 3.29
2261 16.7 Popcorn W #1	SALE 2.29	#A11111	SALE 2.99

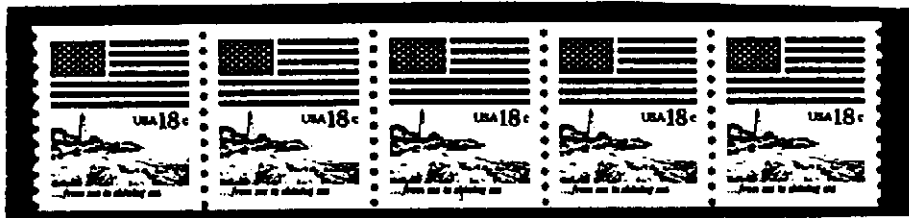
10c EAGLE/SHIELD INCLUDING NEW # A88889 !!

#A88889 (limit 3 per order)	SALE 4.75	#A77777, 88888, 99999	SALE 2.39
#S11111	SALE 2.59	#11111 (BEP)	SALE 2.39
#A11112, 22113, 22112, 43335	SALE 1.99	#A43326, 53335, 54445	SALE 2.39
<u>SPECIAL SALE ON #A33334 ONLY 69.99 EA (limit 2 per order)</u>			

SPECIAL OFFERING 18c FLAG #3

18c Flag, #3 PNC5 XF

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Compare at up to \$1350.00. Only 1 strip available. Suggest you call to reserve.

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2256 8.4c Wheelchair	All 3 PNC5	SALE 15.99
2130 &A 10.1 Oil Wgn	All 5 PNC5	SALE 7.99
2529 19c Fish Boat	All 6 PNC5	SALE 17.39
2607 23c Flag P-S	All 6 PNC5	SALE 19.49
2523 &A 29c Rushmore	All 11 PNC5	SALE 39.99
2525 29c Tulip	All 3 PNC5	SALE 8.29

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3. Prices subject to change without notice. We reserve the right to limit quantities.

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Please mention TPN when ordering !! Thanks

BEP Stock Numbers for paper under the new specifications

Andreotti Press (601)

Stock No.	Printing Method	Paper Coating	Adhesive	Width 18.5 inches
* LP-54G	Gravure	Regular	Dextrin	23
* LP-54GB	Gravure	Regular	Dextrin	13
* LP-697	Gravure	Regular	Dextrin	20.5
* LP-688	Gravure	Regular	Dextrin	21
LP-750	Gravure	Regular	Dextrin	21.5
LP-746	Gravure	Regular	Dextrin	13
LP-704	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	18.5
* LP-698	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	20.5
* LP-703	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	20
LP-717	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	21
LP-751	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	21.5
LP-747	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	22
* LP-716	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	23
* LP-705	Gravure	Low Phosphor	Dextrin	18.5
LP-738	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	20
LP-742	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	20.5
LP-739	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	21
LP-752	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	21.5
LP-748	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	22
LP-741	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	23
LP-740	Gravure	High Phosphor	Dextrin	20
LP-58	Gravure	Regular	Dry gum	22
LP-59	Gravure	Regular	Dry gum	18.5
LP-690	Gravure	Regular	Dry gum	
D Press (902)				
* LP-57	Combination	Regular/Coated	Dextrin	18.5
* LP-689	Combination	Regular/Coated	Dextrin	20.5
* LP-743	Combination	Regular/Coated	Dextrin	21.75
* LP-736	Combination	Regular/Coated	Dextrin	21
LP-706	Combination	Prephosphored/Coated	Dextrin	18.5
LP-707	Combination	Prephosphored/Coated	Dextrin	20.5
LP-709	Combination	Prephosphored/Coated	Dextrin	22
C Press (901)				
* LP-40	Intaglio	Uncoated	Dry gum	18.5
LP-53	Intaglio	Uncoated	Dry gum	22.5
LP-37	Intaglio	Uncoated	Res/Dex	18.5
LP-52	Intaglio	Uncoated	Res/Dex	21
* LP-701	Intaglio	Prephosphor	Res/Dex	18.5
* LP-702	Intaglio	Prephosphor	Res/Dex	20.5
LP-713	Intaglio	Prephosphor	Dry gum	18.5
LP-714	Intaglio	Prephosphor	Dry gum	20.5
LP-715	Intaglio	Prephosphor	Dry gum	22

BEP Stock Numbers for paper under the old specifications

Paper	Description	Printing method	Presses	Gum	Width
LP-37	Untagged	Intaglio	A, B, C, D	Shiny	18.5
LP-40	Untagged	Intaglio	A, B, C, D	Dry	18.5
LP-52	Untagged	Intaglio	C, D	Shiny	20.5
LP-53	Untagged	Intaglio	C, D	Dry	20.5
LP-54G	Untagged	Sheet gravure	A, Andreotti		18.5
LP-54GB	Untagged	Booklet gravure	Andreotti		18.5
LP-57	Untagged	Offset/intaglio	D		18.5
LP-58	Untagged	Gravure	Andreotti		20
LP-59	Untagged	Gravure	Andreotti		22
LP-588	Untagged	Gravure	Andreotti		20.5
LP-689	Untagged	Offset/intaglio	D		20.5
LP-690	Untagged	Gravure	Andreotti		18.5
LP-698	Phosphored	Gravure	Andreotti		18.5
LP-701	Phosphored	Intaglio	A, B, C, D		18.5
LP-702	Phosphored	Intaglio	C, D		20.5
LP-703	Phosphored	Gravure	Andreotti		20.5
LP-705	Phosphored	Gravure	Andreotti		23
LP-706	Phosphored	Offset/intaglio	D		18.5
LP-707	Phosphored	Offset/intaglio	D		20.5
LP-713	Phosphored	Intaglio	A, B, C, D		18.5
LP-714	Phosphored	Intaglio	A, B, C, D		22
LP-714	Phosphored	Intaglio	A, B, C, D		20.5
LP-716	Phosphored	Gravure	Andreotti		20

BEP provides its breakdown of stamp papers

By Stephen G. Esrati

As might have been expected, BEP assigned LP numbers to its paper stocks, if only to make it easier to refer to a specific width.

But, despite what *TPN* was told (see May issue), there are still differences in paper depending on the printing method to be used.

An offset paper is still an offset paper and a gravure paper is still a gravure paper. They just get different names.

Some of the old papers, such as LP-40, are still in use, although the new list supplied by BEP says it is only for the C Press, whereas it had previously been designated for the defunct A Press, the B Press—which is still being used as a standby press—and the C and D presses.

As a matter of fact, all the papers specifically listed for the D Press in the new list are for combination (offset and intaglio) printing. But the D Press can print intaglio alone, and should, therefore, be able to use all the papers listed for the C Press as well.

Retention of the untagged LP-40 means we may still expect untagged PNCs or Great Americans on paper with dull gum (called dry gum by BEP), although most future production can be expected on paper with shiny gum (called dextrin gum by BEP).

One problem in comparing the two lists is in the terminology. The old list used the word "phosphored." The new list makes a distinction among prephosphored papers that will take us some time to decode.

"Low phosphor" paper, obviously, refers to what the new USPS paper specifications refer to as Type I paper. That paper is supposed to emit phosphorescence under test conditions measuring 175±20 phosphor meter units (PMUs). It should be seen only on stamps printed by gravure without a heavy application of colors.

"High phosphor" paper would be the kind of paper needed to print stamps like the New Year's stamp showing the Chinese rooster, a stamp that did not emit enough PMUs until an added tagging block was applied.

[The Rooster was printed on mottled prephosphored paper, a paper we now recognize as being truly prephosphored with the phosphors in the paper mash. That would seem to indicate that the brighter solid prephosphored (Lenz)

paper is the "high-phosphor" paper, which is phosphor coated.]

But those two paper types are shown in BEP's list only for gravure printing.

Papers in the new list, such as LP-58 and LP-54G, are described as having a "regular" coating, but from the old list we know that they were untagged. Thus, "regular" means untagged.

Several papers in the new list show an asterisk. A spokesperson for BEP said the asterisks are only of internal importance and may refer to delivery times. Our examination of the asterisks indicates that they are on papers that existed before the new paper specifications came into force.

It is not known whether these starred papers will continue in use after a period of transition.

The most interesting section of BEP's new list contrasts two sorts of paper intended for the D Press: "regular/coated" and "prephosphored/coated." As we have already seen, "regular" means untagged.

Of the "regular/coated" papers, LP-57 and LP-689 appear on both lists and were described on the old list as untagged. What the word "coated" refers to is probably related to the fact that these papers are intended for the offset/intaglio D Press when it is printing in combination, meaning offset as well as intaglio.

What BEP is referring to by "coated" in these instances is that the paper has the smooth finish needed for printing by offset.

In the old specs, LP-689 was listed as an untagged offset-intaglio. It is now listed as "regular/coated." We believe that means an offset paper that is untagged.

Carol Morehouse's letter in this issue of *TPN* about the Cherokee Strip stamps is informative. She found an untagged vertical stripe on these stamps, meaning that they are overall-tagged on press.

The USPS news release on these stamps said the stamp was printed by offset/intaglio. That means it had to be printed on one of the D Press papers listed for combination press work, using regular (untagged) or prephosphored paper that is coated (smooth for offset).

The Cherokee Strip stamps were printed by ABN at its Los Angeles plant using a Simplex intaglio press and a six-color Miller offset press.

We would guess that Morehouse's two examples on mottled paper would be from the group of three papers listed for the D Press by BEP for prephosphored/coated papers.

Why ABN would print the same stamp on two different papers is unknown. But the possibility exists that ABN was using up its untagged combination paper before switching to prephosphored paper.

[In addition, we cannot, for now, tell whether Morehouse's overall-tagged stamps were tagged on the Simplex or the Miller press. But the test is relatively simple. If the intaglio is on top, the tagging was done on the Miller.]

LP-706, which is listed as "prephosphored/coated," was listed in the old specs as a phosphored offset-intaglio

Dealers find 3d version of 10¢ Boat

Al Haake and Dr. Robert Rabinowitz have found a third variety of the 10¢ Canal Boat.

For the story of how they found it, please turn to Page 97.

• The original Plate 1 stamp (10T1) was

block tagged with dull gum off the B Press. It was issued in 1987.

• Last year, a shiny-gum, B Press version on mottled prephosphored paper

was found, also from Plate 1.

• The latest find, also on Plate 1, appears to have been printed before the stamps found last year, but after the original stamps. It is on Paper III_n off the B Press, with a plate-number interval of 52 and overall tagging.

Asked whether he was certain that the stamps were not prephosphored, Haake said: "Absolutely! They have a tagging break."

Dr. Rabinowitz said the break is at 9R.

The numbering of the stamps for the *PNC Catalog* will be in the probable order in which the stamps were printed, not in the order of their discovery:

10T1—Original stamp. Block tagged. Dull gum. LP-40 paper. Paper III.

10T1i—Same, overall tagged. LP-40 paper. Paper III_n.

10T1ii—Same, shiny gum, prephosphored LP-701 paper. (The *PNC Study Group* has not yet classified shiny-gum prephosphored papers.)

What makes us think that this is the order of printing?

Our information about the original stamp is extremely scanty. It was printed on Plate 177419-1, which was assigned on Nov. 4, 1986. We have no dates to press.

But we do have another set of clues: the tagging.

We know that USPS gradually shifted away from block tagging to overall tagging. We saw this on the re-engraved 4¢ Stagecoach, 15¢ Tugboat (Plate 2), and 20¢ Cable Car (Plate 2). All but the 4¢ are known on Paper III_n.

The earliest use on all three was in the second half of 1990.

[The 1991 *PNC Catalog* gave a press date on May 29, 1991, for the overall-tagged 4¢ and added Wayne Youngblood's report that 77,000 impressions were printed that day. But the earliest known use of that stamp is in November 1990, so the printing Youngblood observed had to be a return to press.]

The 10¢ Canal Boat was the first stamp reissued on prephosphored paper with shiny gum.

paper. That is probably the mottled paper found by Morehouse.

Tentative conclusions to be drawn from the new list are:

• Not all PNCs and Great Americans will come out with shiny gum.

• Untagged stamp paper can still be expected to be used for tagged stamps, with the tagging done on press. □

New BEP paper specs prove order of printing

It was first found unused on a charity's return cover by Richard Beecher in July 1992.

Beecher's stamp was, at first, unrecognized as having shiny gum, only as "overall tagged." But when Al Haake turned up unused rolls of 3,000 last year, we saw the shiny gum for the first time. Beecher checked his cover and saw shiny gum.

The stamps were first termed "overall tagged," but on unused stamps, it was easy to observe the mottled tagging that is characteristic of paper with phosphors in the paper itself. Also, Haake was able to count the plate-number interval and prove that the shiny-gum stamps had still been printed on the B Press.

[We had been told by Assistant Postmaster General Gordon Morison that the B Press was defunct. Appearance of these stamps proved it was still being used. BEP later confirmed to *TPN* that it had become a standby press.]

So now we begin our paper studies.

Under the old BEP specs, the only untagged paper for the B Press with dry gum was LP-40. That would have had to be the 18½-inch paper on which the original stamp was printed. Block tagging was applied on the B Press.

When the change from block tagging to overall tagging took place, no change was needed in the paper. A dull-gum, untagged paper was still needed. Again, that would have been LP-40.

But in 1990, there was a shortage of LP-40 paper (*TPN*, November 1990, Page 103), which caused a stamp shortage. Also, Ives Corp.'s two-year contract to supply Paper III to BEP expired, and BEP awarded the contract to Paper Corp. of the United States. That resulted in Paper III_n, with diagonal gum ridges (*TPN*, January 1991, Page 19).

That places the printing of the dull-gum Canal Boat stamps in the era of the other stamps that were reissued with overall tagging after being printed originally with block tagging. And we believe that to have been before the second half of 1990.

The new paper specs, calling for shiny gum and prephosphoring, came out in 1991 and were adopted in 1992.

But among the new specs, which no longer list the "defunct" B Press, we find three prephosphored papers under "C Press" with shiny gum, and only one—LP-701—is 18½ inches wide. To prove that it is the shiny-gum paper found by Beecher, we note that it was already listed on the old BEP specs—and for the B Press, at that! □



Dr. Rabinowitz's false alarm brings vain Detroit efforts

There was a wild surge of activity in mid-April in the Detroit area after Dr. Robert Rabinowitz reported in *Stamp Collector* that the BEP version of the Eagle and Shield coils would go on sale at the Plymouth Show on April 24.

Requests came in from all over the country for real (as opposed to back-dated) FDCs. Conrad Keydel, who dreams up unique covers, rushed into production. So did Kurt and Joann Lenz, with the help of Gerri Adiman.

But it was all in vain. When the Detroiters finally got through to someone at Postal Headquarters in Washington, they found out that Dr. Rabinowitz had been wrong.

Dr. Rabinowitz said he was told of the "first day" by a "Product Publicity Specialist" in the USPS Corporate Relations Department, once called the Communications Office.

Sorry, always on the fritz

Three of the four Postal Mailing Centers in Washington are dispensing the new UVMS on mottled prephosphored paper and with shiny gum. Myron G. Hill Jr. went to the three machines several times to obtain them. All were out of order.

We told you so

When the Postal Service made a deal with the American Stamp Dealers Association in 1992, *TPN's* main story (May 1992) said "Collectors sure to be offended by USPS deal with ASDA."

Less than a year later, the cave in Kansas City, now known as the Philatelic Fulfillment Center, announced that it would no longer fill (or should one say "fulfill?") collectors' orders for Postal Buddy change-of-address cards, leaving collectors who want them dependent on members of the ASDA.

Don't say we did not tell you so.

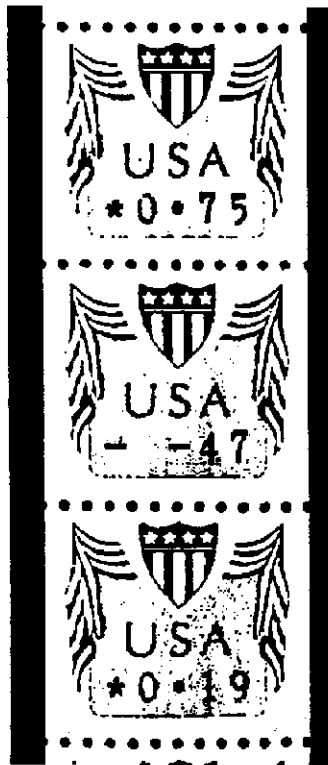
Gap list available

A list of almost 50 different Cottrell precancel gaps, some of which have not been on the market for several years, were offered in April by D. J. Sikka of Minneapolis.

The strips included long strips (up to 11 stamps in length).

Call (612) 922-7211 for an update.

all the PNC news that fits we print
and some Great Americans, too



You pay only '— — 47,' whatever that is

Because the Plymouth Show is held in a school, it cannot start on a Friday, but Kurt Lenz arranged to take PNCers on a tour of Postal Mailing Centers in the area to crank out UVMS.

Lenz and Ron Maifeld struck it rich when the PMC spewed out strips containing "— — 47."

A technician who services the machines told Lenz that a previous software update had made such occurrences impossible. The accompanying picture from Lenz's collection proves the technician in error.

USPS makes it tough for philatelic clerks

The Postal Service has ordered withdrawal of all but the prephosphored 23¢ Cassatt [Item 1043] on June 19. The April-May-June issue of *Stamps, etc.*, gave these stamps a different item Number [0043]. The prephosphored version of the stamps [Item T1043] was supposed to remain on sale.

The confusion began long before June 19, with philatelic clerks across the country warning collectors that all Cassatts

were going off sale.

The *Postal Bulletin* carried this warning to philatelic outlets and Stores of the Future: "Offices must withdraw the listed stamp items immediately from all selling points.... The Inspection Service, when conducting various audits and reviews, will verify (that) these items have been removed from sale."

TPN welcomes reports (amusing ones preferred) from readers speculating on how the Postal Inspectors can tell the prephosphored Plate 2 (which stays on sale) from the overall-tagged Plate 2 (which must be removed from sale).

Which Rooster?

If you are looking for Happy New Year stamps on which the tagging block is over the intaglio, Ralph Persels has a tip. They come with intaglio plate numbers 2 and 3. Plates 1, 4, and 5 have the intaglio on top. Persels says Plate 1 has no block tagging, but this may be so only for some Plate 1 stamps. Most have intaglio on top of the tagging block.

Indigo White House

Linn's reports the finding of strips of Plate 6 of the 29¢ Flag over the White House with indigo ink instead of blue.

Author Michael Schreiber said the stamps were in PMS 296U instead of PMS 295U.

Some of the stamps had been slit horizontally, indicating that they were tagged for destruction by the pressmen, but they ended up as rolls of 100, nevertheless.

It is not yet known whether this is a color error or a shade caused by ink contamination.

That would determine the Scott Catalogue listing. It'll be in the *PNC Catalog*.

How many 20¢ Flags?

Wholesale dealer Dave Kaplan has tried to keep up with his customers' demands on the 20¢ Flag sheet stamps. He is completely out of all strips of 20 perforated on the L Perforator.

But, according to Kaplan, all three plate numbers exist with both types of perforation.

Our compilation, to date shows:
Plates 2, 3: Shiny gum. Block tagged (small). Bull's-eye perforator

Plates 3, 4: Dull gum. Block tagged (small). L-Perforator.

Any reports of other strips would be most welcome.

Redwood City 'Postmaster Provisional' scam returns

By Ken Lawrence

Three years ago, *TPN* gave a detailed account of the so-called "Postmaster Provisional" covers created for a bulk catalog mailing by a California firm, the Redwood City Seed Co. ("A look back at the scam of the 0.1¢ 'provisionals,'" May 1990)

A few months ago, the proprietor of the firm who had created the covers, Craig Dremann, obtained a copy of that article from Rob Washburn. Dremann was unhappy about it, and angrily demanded a retraction. As usual in such conversations, Dremann made vague threats of legal action should his demand be denied.

I gave him the standard reply. If he could show me any mistakes in my report, I'd be happy to run a correction. Even if he couldn't, the editor would be happy to publish his response (but naturally I'd have the opportunity to refute it). A few days later, he called again, offering "facts" to contradict the *TPN* story, but none were persuasive and I stood by my story.

Steve Esrati never received a response for publication from Dremann, but the May 1, 1993, issue of *Coil Line* contains a three-page article that gives Dremann's "true tale" of "the first official Postmaster's Provisionals in the United States in 123 years!" (The exclamation point is Dremann's. "Tall tale" more accurately describes the content.)

At the end, Dremann offers *Coil Line* readers an opportunity to obtain examples of the covers free through a lottery-type distribution. This is especially interesting in light of his claim to me that he had retained none of the covers, but had sold them all at a modest price to a stamp dealer now deceased. (That was to support his denial that he had profited from the scam in 1984.)

The background

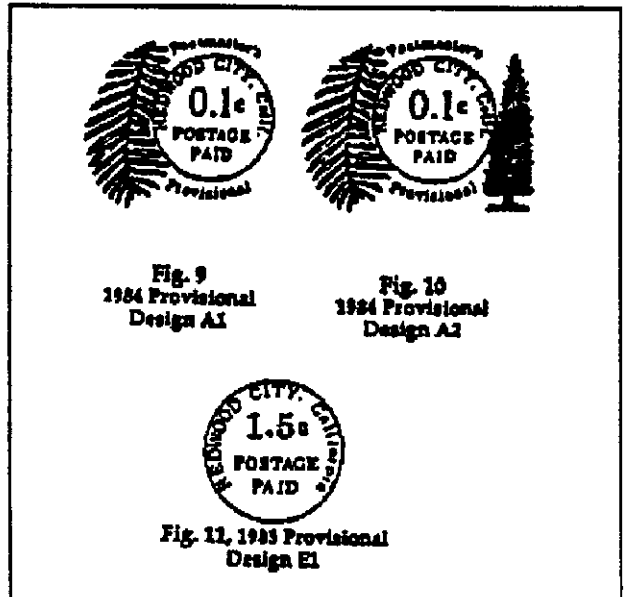
To recapitulate briefly, when the basic presort third-class commercial bulk rate rose in 1984 from 10.9¢ per piece to 11¢ per piece, the Postal Service authorized mailers to continue using precanceled 10.9¢ Hansom Cab coils to cover the new rate until 11¢ Caboose stamps were available. This usage, known as "false franking," requires the mailer to pay the extra cost in a lump sum at the time of posting.

At the time, Dremann claimed to have worried that his mail might have been delayed for lack of evidence that the full postal amount had been paid, a nonsensical pretense. Since in reality all bulk mail franked with postage stamps (which are never required; permit imprints will suffice) is false-franked, only the acceptance unit is permitted to determine whether the correct postage has been prepaid.

Ironically, Dremann benefitted from this provision of the regulations. Once the Redwood City postmaster had accepted his illegally postmarked mailings, no one except the Postal Inspection Service could have prevented them from being delivered. But Dremann was also lucky. Others who have tried to promote illicit private postmarks as official markings have served felony terms in federal prison.

With the assistance of gullible postal employees, Dremann created a pair of pictorial handstamps inscribed "Postmaster's Provisional" outside a circle and "Redwood City, Calif./0.1¢/POSTAGE/PAID" inside. These were then applied to the catalog envelopes in magenta and green ink, creating four varieties.

Although claiming to have no interest in stamp collecting, Dremann fired off a news release promoting his phony creations. *Linn's* took the bait, and ran a story about them on the front page. When Frank Thomas at USPS headquarters read the story, he realized immediately that this was an illegal usage of an unauthorized postmark, and ordered the Redwood City postmaster to accept no more mail bearing such markings. Those that had already been prepared had to be obliterated before they were accepted for mailing.



ROGUE'S GALLERY—Craig Dremann's illustrations that accompanied his *Coil Line* article. Fig. 11 was used to increase postage on the 11¢ Caboose to 12.5 cents.

The story as *Coil Line* got it

For *Coil Line*, Dremann has concocted a different tale from the one he used to tell. He's just folks, and prefers the old-fashioned, simple life. "When a new rate change went into effect in the past, the post office always had a ready supply of postage stamps with the new rates—until one day when I went to mail my 1984 catalog."

That, of course, is baloney. Not only had false franking been permitted and recommended for each bulk rate change since 1978, but there have also been many bulk rates during the past 30 years for which no appropriate stamps were ever issued, as is true today.

"I want true franking, not false franking!" (Again, Dremann's bang.)

There was a legal way out

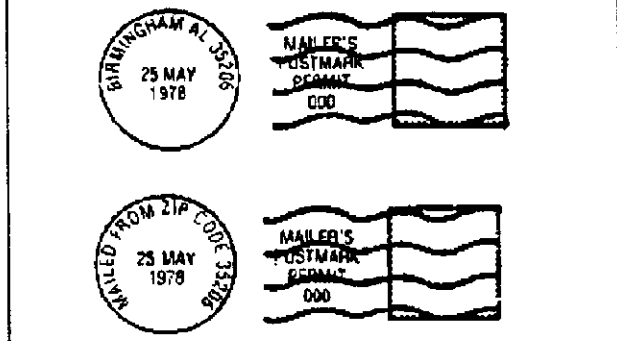
Had he merely desired a full nominal 11¢ per piece on each catalog envelope, as he now belatedly claims, that could have been accomplished easily and legally. The only requirements for postage stamps on bulk mail is that they be precanceled, and that the envelopes bear a correct endorsement and not an incorrect endorsement.

(This means you can't use stamps with incorrect service inscriptions on bulk mail, because the service inscription doubles as the endorsement, and if you use ordinary stamps you must add an endorsement to the envelope. As PNC collectors know, the Postal Service does allow such "wrong" usage on properly endorsed single-piece first-class mail by permit holders.)

Thus, all Dremann had to do was to put a "Bulk Rate" endorsement on his envelope and frank them with any combination of ordinary (not service inscribed) precanceled postage stamps totaling 11 cents.

Despite erroneous reports elsewhere, there is no limit on the number of precanceled stamps that can be affixed to a bulk mailing, as long as they do not impose handling problems (the franking should be identical for all pieces in a given mailing, although different presort bundles and so-called residuals actually are calculat-

333 Mailers are authorized to use either design shown under Format A for their precanceled postmark. *Format A:*



HOW IT SHOULD BE—These are proper uses of a mailer's permit postmark on a bulk mailing as shown in the Domestic Mail Manual, Par. 143.333. The post office that issued the permit, and is its only acceptance unit, is given in the circle (city, state, and ZIP code). The words "Mailer's Postmark Permit Number 000" appear in the obliterator portion. When applied to unprecanceled stamps, such a postmark is considered a precancellation. The rules forbid private parties to create other types of postmarks.

ed at differing per-piece rates) and as long as they are properly presorted and bundled.

The precancels could have been one of three types:

- Overprinted with a Redwood City, Calif., city-state 10-subject vinyl handstamp device
- Overprinted with plain lines by BEP (a pair of 4¢ and a single 3¢ from the Americana Series is one possibility using only sheet stamps; another would have been to substitute a 3¢ Parkman coil for the 3¢ Americana)
- Or—and this is directly pertinent to Dremann's fable—canceled with a mailer's permit postmark.

Dremann's stamps should have been disallowed

A mailer's permit postmark is the only kind that can be created by private individuals. Postal regulations specify the exact format, but allow continued use of those that were properly manufactured to older specifications before the regulations changed. No other designs are permissible, and a copy of the markings must be on file before the permit is issued. Only black ink is allowed.

Naturally, violations of postal regulations occur on a daily basis, usually by mailers and postal employees who don't know the rules. One common violation is to use red meter ink for mailer's postmarks on bulk mail. Certainly these anomalies are of interest to collectors, but that doesn't elevate them to catalog status.

Because Dremann's devices were not licensed or properly approved, they were illegal. Even had he obtained a properly configured mailer's postmark and a permit to use it, the rules forbade the use of green or magenta ink. Since he did not have a legitimate postmark, all stamps on his covers that had been touched by the strike of his handstamp should have been disallowed as postage, because any unauthorized obliteration renders stamps valueless.

Other than that, his marker would have been simply a notice of no postal meaning had he omitted the term "Postmaster's Provisional," and had he not tied the stamps with it. Thus, his later handstamps that omit the term are legal, but postally useless, if they do

not obliterate any portion of the stamps. If they do touch the stamps, they should not have been allowed in the mails, and it is quite likely they weren't—either the covers were never mailed, or the handstamps were applied after delivery.

One easy way to understand this difference is to imagine that Dremann wanted to send out campaign envelopes that read "Vote for Dremann!" As long as such a cachet did not interfere with mail-processing equipment, it would be legal. But the same slogan hand-stamped or overprinted on the stamps would not be legal, whether or not some minor postal official had given him permission. Such an overprint simply would render stamps valueless as postage, but an "Official Business" endorsement would cross the line to fraud.

Dremann tries to jumble each of these distinctions in his *Coil Line* article.

[*Editor's note:* Since Dremann admits that many of the covers he is giving away were mailed to himself, Lawrence's supposition of an ex-post-facto application of the marking is possible.]

Cinderellas do sometimes go through the mail

Over the years, I have added many exotic, unusual usages of bulk-rate Transportation coils to my collection. To me the most interesting are the Savage Republic overprints by a California music firm that also issues a lot of cinderella stamps. Like Dremann's, they shouldn't have been allowed, but they made it through the mails anyhow.

Even postmasters have repeatedly violated the rules, sometimes out of ignorance and other times because of corrupt relationships with philatelists. Well-known examples are postal bisects, which the United States has never allowed, and fancy cancels of the 1920s and 1930s. These, too, are interesting collectibles, but should be understood for what they really are.

The difference, and what makes Dremann's case contemptible, is that he seeks to deceive collectors into believing that his private handstamp, created in violation of postal regulations, was an official post office marking.

A frustrated postmaster who ran out of 3¢ stamps when that was the letter rate, and who then used bisected 6¢ stamps in violation of the rules, is certainly an object of my sympathy, and his cover is a nice collectible. A charity that uses red meter ink for its mailer's postmark on a bulk mailing will not be condemned by me.

But someone who mails himself hundreds of illicit covers, then promotes them deceptively in the philatelic press, is no innocent. *Coil Line* should be ashamed not only for propagating Dremann's myth without an explanatory correction alongside it, but also for propagating the myth that genuine 19th-century postmaster provisionals were created by anyone who felt like making one, thus lending legitimacy to Dremann's absurd fantasy: "Once these modern postmaster's provisionals are listed in Scott's then the tale will be completed."

Ripoffs never end in philately

Every few years, someone tries to persuade the stamp hobby that certain illicitly concocted labels or markings are legitimate official stamps or "postal history." One could compile a lengthy, depressing list of such ripoffs: Lundy, Maluku Selantan, Staffa, Nagaland, Calf of Man, Royalist Yemen, State of Orman, Dhufar, Unita, Free Afghanistan, Redwood City, and on and on.

Properly understood, and collected for what they are, all these phantoms can be interesting offbeat items, some with fascinating political and military histories. But hyped into things they are not, they debase the hobby, and interfere with a full understanding of stamps and the mails.

Craig Dremann differs from his mountebank predecessors only in his forthright contempt for a scholarly appreciation of modern postal history.

HOW TO ORDER: Dremann's rules for obtaining one of his "free" covers require you to send him two self-addressed manila envelopes (one 7.5" by 10.5" and one 9" by 12", each with \$1 in first-class postage affixed, and a mailing label made out to you. Mail to Redwood City Provisionals, PO Box 609, Redwood City, CA 94064.

The secret search for the new 10¢ Canal Boat

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz and Al Haake actually found the new 10¢ Canal Boat (technical details on Page 93) in the fall of 1992, but had to keep it secret until now to avoid getting "egg on our faces."

The story of the find was disclosed to *TPN* by Dr. Rabinowitz.

"In the fall of 1992, when the shiny-gum Canal Boats were found, we searched for more. At that time we found some dull-gum rolls of 3,000 mixed in with the shiny gum. The quality—both side-to-side and top-to-bottom—was poor.

"We started looking for more. We both did a lot of calling and found offices using the 10¢ Canal Boat. We ordered them, but in every instance we got block-tagged stamps.

"I made arrangements for a post office to order more Canal Boats from Washington. The minimum order for that is half a case, or 32 rolls of 3,000. We got block-tagged stamps, and we had to eat all those rolls.

"Once, we almost found some. One post office was supplying the stamps to a large mailer who liked to use them on return envelopes, similar to the return envelopes of the Disabled American Veterans.

"We came close to getting some there.

"The lady in accountable paper there told us that she had two cases. One case was labeled October 1991 by BEP;



10T1

the other was labeled January 1991. But I did not know which was which.

"So I arranged with the lady in accountable paper to trade her two rolls of 3,000 if she would mail me one roll from each case and label them as to which was which.

"I sent her two of the block-tagged rolls and got back one roll of shiny gum, dated October 1991, and one roll of dull gum, dated January 1991.

"By the time I got back to her, however, she had sent out the case I wanted.

"Meanwhile, we had 1,000 to 1,100 strips from the original find."

Haake pointed out that this was a lot fewer than had been found of "A32333" of the 10¢ Eagle and Shield.

"What could we do?" Dr. Rabinowitz continued. "We probably could have sold them then, and made a lot of money—only to get egg on our faces if more were found. So we decided to act responsibly



10T1i

and said nothing, thinking more would probably show up.

"At what price could we have sold them then? 1,000 strips is not enough to supply the PNC market.

"In May, more were found—but in rolls of 500. Not too many were in good condition, and we both ate a lot of bad rolls."

On June 1, Teresa Wajek of



10T1ii

PNCs Unlimited called *TPN* to say she had found a new stamp, also in rolls of 500. Unfortunately, Mrs. Wajek was about six months late with her find and a couple of days late with her report.

Within days, other dealers also found the dull-gum, overall-tagged Canal Boats, always in rolls of 500. The 3,000s appear to have disappeared. □

Canal Boat boxes say 'Precancel'

When Al Haake received a partial box of 10¢ Canal Boats in rolls of 500, one thing that struck Haake was that the box said: "10¢ Precancel."

That raises these possibilities:

- Could the overall-tagged Canal Boats have been shipped out in error in lieu of the BEP version of the 10¢ Eagle and Shield, which were

supposed to be shipped by BEP on all orders of 10¢ Tractor Trailer precancels (see "No more Tractor Trailers," Page 99)?

- If that did occur, can mailers who requested 10¢ Tractor Trailers use them on their bulk mail (which, under the rules, must be franked by precancels if stamps are used)? □

SUMMER SPECIAL

17¢ Auto, 3C, 4C

Scarce Type II Paper
Gap 4L in PS/10

\$95 each strip F-VF

\$115 each strip VF-XF

\$135 each strip XF-S

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz

37-E Stanwick Place
Stamford CT 06905

(203) 325-2312



2 new E&S stamps out, 1 gets official early release...

Two new versions of the 10¢ Eagle and Shield coils were issued May 29 at Secaucus, N.J.

One E&S, in rolls of 3,000, was printed by BEP; the other, in rolls of 10,000, by Stamp Venturers (SV). The large rolls had previously been printed by American Bank Note Co. (ABN).

Despite the official May 29 first day, the BEP version went into use in April (see the internal USPS communication at the right). Early sales were plentiful and unofficial FDCs were prepared in such places as Eagle, Wisc.

The BEP version printed is in dark brown, orange-yellow, blue, red, and green, the same colors used by ABN. The stamps say "USA Bulk Rate," not the previous "Bulk Rate USA." The plate-number interval is 24, and the stamps were printed on BEP's Andreotti press.

(The *Postal Bulletin* incorrectly said only the BEP version would say "USA Bulk Rate." That would have been a handy way to allow postal personnel to tell which stamp is which for reordering



NEW



OLD

purposes, but the incompetents now running the Postal Service failed to carry out that grand plan.)

The SV version shows the eagle in metallic gold, not brown, and also has green, blue, red, and brown. The plate number, 33 stamps apart, says "S1111." The gold stamps are aesthetically pleasing.

The 33-stamp plate-number interval points to a Champlain press.

(TPN did ask the USPS product publicity specialists what press was used. The answer came back as: "gravure." TPN also asked where the stamps were printed, hoping to be told that it was at J.W. Fergusson & Sons, which owns a Champlain press. The answer came back as: "Chantilly, Va." That's the site of Stamp Venturers' offices.

Both versions

First day: May 29, 1993
 First-day city: Secaucus, N.J.
 Printing process: gravure
 Size: Image: .71x.82 inches or 18.0x20.8mm
 Overall: .87x.965 inches or 22.1x24.5mm

No more Tractor Trailers; use BEP's E&S

The following Broadcast Message was sent over the Postal Service's internal messaging system on April 30, 1993. Note the February date.

FEBRUARY 8, 1993
 SUBJECT: ITEM 7910A, 3000-10 CENT TRACTOR TRAILER COIL

ITEM 7910A, 3000-10 CENT TRACTOR TRAILER COILS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE AT THE BUREAU OF ENGRAVING AND PRINTING (BEP). REQUISITIONS ON FILE AT BEP FOR ITEM 7910A WILL BE CONVERTED TO THE BEP'S VERSION OF ITEM 7977A, 3000-10 CENT EAGLE & SHIELD BULK RATE COIL, TO BE DELIVERED IN ACCOUNTING PERIOD 8. (APRIL 3 THROUGH APRIL 30, 1993)

HOWEVER, ITEM 7977A, 3000-10 CENT EAGLE & SHIELD BULK RATE COIL, PRINTED BY AMERICAN BANK NOTE COMPANY, IS AVAILABLE AT YOUR ACCOUNTABLE PAPER DEPOSITORY.

BEP version

Colors: dark brown, orange-yellow, blue, red, and green
 [Press: Andreotti]
 Plate number: 11111
 [Plate-number interval: 24]
 [PNC Catalog Number: 10U11111PX]
 Material in brackets not included in USPS news release
News Release 41 (received at TPN April 30)

Stamp Venturers version

Colors: metallic gold, green, blue, red, brown
 [Press: probably Champlain at J.W. Fergusson & Sons]
 Plate number: S11111
 [Plate-number interval: 33]
 [PNC Catalog Number: 10U(S11111)PY]
 Material in brackets not included in USPS news release
News Release 41 (received at TPN April 30)

...and 23¢ USA hits 3d version

A 23¢ USA presort printed by Stamp Venturers was prematurely placed on sale. The stamp, with plate numbers S111, officially went on sale on May 14. Dr. Robert Rabinowitz obtained it April 23.

The stamp was reported to the PNC community by Jim Adams at a regional meeting April 24 of the Plate Number Coil Collector Club (PNC). Adams was relaying the news from Dr. Rabinowitz.

The stamp did not have an official first day ceremony, although its first day coincided with Romplex 93.

This is the third version of the stamp, originally printed by American Bank Note Co. in rolls of 10,000. Those stamps had four plate numbers and the prefix "A."

No new bidding was required to order the stamps from a different printer.

When BEP printed stamps in this design in rolls of 500 and 3,000, they bore four numbers without a prefix. BEP's stamps also differed in color and in typography.

Stamp Venturers' spokesman, Marc Fleming, said he could give no information about the stamp. He said all such information had to come from the Postal Service.

Valoree Vargo, a USPS spokesperson, was called immediately after Fleming declined to provide any answers. She had never heard of the stamps. When she called back, she said the only thing different about the stamps would be the colors.

Later, she faxed a news release and filled in the gaps by phone. TPN specifically asked where the stamps were printed, but Ms. Vargo could only say "Stamp Venturers in Chantilly, Va.," the address of Stamp Venturers' headquarters.

As to the press used, her answer was: "Gravure." But when she said the interval was 33 stamps apart, we could guess that the stamps were probably printed at J.W. Fergusson & Sons on a Champlain press.

USPS said the colors would be blue, red, and black. The actual colors of the numbers are a dark blue "S1," followed by a light blue "1," followed by a red "1."

23¢ USA Presorted First-Class

Issue date: May 14, 1993
 Issue city: Denver, Col.
 Printing process: gravure
 Printer: Stamp Venturers (probably at J.W. Fergusson & Sons)
 Press: (probably a Champlain, printing 13 rows of 33)
 Size: Image: .71x.82 inches or 18.0x20.8mm
 Overall: .87x.965 inches or 22.1x24.5mm
 Plate number: S111
 Colors: blue, red, black (This is wrong: plate numbers are dark blue, light blue, and red)
 Plate number interval: 33
 [PNC Catalog Number: 23F(S111)PZ]
News Release 41 (received at TPN April 30)

Tagging breaks on Cottrell Press PNCs (updated through April 15, 1993)

Cat. No.	6L	5L	4L	3L	2L	1L	1R	2R	3R	4R	5R	6R	Symbols, abbreviations	
272		B Sib	B Sib J	B Cib Sib	B Cib J								Symbols, abbreviations B = Bar (vertical) C = Clip (T-shaped) S = Screw head Clips and screw heads also show bar breaks. Clip and screw locations: l=top; b=bottom; c=complete fastener J = a junction of four mats has been found at this location. This is seen as a horizontal break PLUS a vertical break. % = exists with Sb, but not in a numbered strip.	
276		B Sib	B Sib J	B Cib Sib	B Cib J									
278		B Sib		B Cib J	B Cib J									
2710		B Sib		B Cib J	B Cib J									
571							JOINT LINE			B Sib	B Sib J	Sib		
572										B Sib	B Sib J	Sib		
573		B Sb	B Sib J	B Cib J	B Cib	B Cib J								
574		B Sb	B Sib J	B Cib J	B Cib	B Cib J								
5.273			B St %											
5.275			B St %											
1771				B Cib J	B Cib J									
1772				B Cib J	B Cib J									
1773	B Cib J			B Cib J	B Cib J					Sb				
1774	B Cib J			B Cib J	B Cib J					Sl				

NOTE: Plates 1 and 2 of the 5.2¢ Sleigh have been found with a horizontal joint line, meaning a vertical tagging break exists. Anyone with a full roll would be able to confirm location of vertical breaks.

Notes to above chart

1774, 3R found used as a PS/4.
1773, 3R, found mint.

All positions are given by stamp, not by perforation. 1L is the stamp with the plate number.

This chart developed and updated by Eugene R. Ernst. Please report new finds to him at 15522 Windy Cove, Houston, TX 77095. Please include a diagram showing how you count position.

Overall tagging

(only on rolls where the tagging break is constant and does not 'walk')

- 4T1Ri (W) 2L, 9R
- 4T1X (on stamps) (W) 11L7, 9L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 2L7, 1L, 3R, 5R, 7R, 9R7, 10R7
- 4T1X (on post) 12L, 11L, 10L, 9L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L, 3L, 2L, 1L, Line, 1R, 2R, 3R, 5R, 6R, 8R, 9R, 10R, 11R, 12R
- 5T1Y # 19L, #13L, 10L, #8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L7, 3L, #2L, #1L, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R, 12R
- 10T1i 9R
- 15T2i (W) 12L, 11L, 10L, 9L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L, 3L, 2L, 1L, Line, 1R, 2R, 3R, 4R, 5R, 6R, 8R, 11R
- 20T2Xi 12L/R
- 31T1 (W) 12L, 11L, 3L, 2L, 1L, 4R

* 5T1Y Circus Wagon is confirmed with only one break in 52 stamps, stamps not marked here two.

"W" indicates that a "walking" tagging break has also been reported. This means a break can be found on all positions.

A question mark indicates that the reported position has not been confirmed.

Untagged stripe across top or bottom

- 4T1Ri Top
- 5T1Y Top, bottom
- 15T2i Top, bottom
- 31T1 Top, bottom

Ernst welcomes new reports.

BEP explains UVM reprinting on 'canceled' plate

How can a plate be canceled by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing only to be put back on press two years later?

That is what apparently happened to the C Press plate that was used to print the ECA-GARD Universal Vending Machine Coil (UVM).

Plate 189136-1 was assigned on July 5, 1991, and termed a "Non-Denominated Universal Vending, Coil—Intaglio." That was in the report of plate activity for July 1991, which was included in the March 1992 USPS report. The report gave the plate size as 960, or 20 rows of 48.

According to the BEP report for September 1991 (the last BEP report mailed out by USPS), the plate went on press on Aug. 17, 1991. It was canceled on Sept. 3, 1991. The September plate-activity report did not provide the total number of impressions. But the report made one important change. The plate was now printing only 864 subjects, or 18 rows of 48.

We asked BEP for a printing total from the canceled plate. We were wary from the start because BEP almost always gives impression totals when it cancels a plate. Yet 189136-1 was one of seven plates canceled in September 1991; BEP reported no impression totals for any of them.

In the summer of 1992, BEP told TPN that 14,000 impressions had been made from the plate on Aug. 21, 1991.

The difference in press dates is insignificant. Aug. 17 was a Saturday. The plate may have gone on press that day, and the printing run could have ended on Tuesday, Aug. 21. Such weekend differences have been noted in many reports.

In February 1993, Charles Yeager reported in *Linn's* that the plate had gone back to press this January and had printed 14,000 rolls of 3,000 stamps. (We are also suspicious of the repetition of the "14,000.")

It had been understood that once a plate is canceled, it is defaced and made unusable. Where did the plate come from that was used for the reprinting?

BEP told TPN that Plate 189136-1 was sent back to the C Press (the same press used previously) on Jan. 15, 1993, and printed 100,000 impressions. The

100,000 figure does not coincide with Yeager's 14,000 rolls, no matter how we do the arithmetic.

But what appears to be a huge mystery turns out to be no mystery at all.

When we asked BEP how a canceled plate could be used to print more stamps, we finally got an explanation. It's because of the plate size.

"We actually made two plates Number 1 for that stamp," said Leah Akbar, a spokesperson for BEP.

[Interestingly, Ms. Akbar said that as a federal agency, BEP could not fall under the Postal Service's ban not to speak to reporters.]

"The first plate had the wrong number of subjects and we redid it. No stamps were printed from it."

We deduce from this that the 864-subject plate was the wrong one, for it was the plate that was canceled. That means the 960-subject plate is alive and well and printing UVMs. □

Historic tagging FDCs

On Aug. 1, 1993, the Post Office Department authorized use of a "First Day of Use of Luminescent Tagging" postmark in Dayton Ohio. Covers show the 8¢ Jet over Capitol airmail stamp.

- Artcraft\$10.00
- Same, block of 4\$12.50
- Artmaster\$12.50

POD discontinued special postmarks on later tagging first days. Send check, plus \$1 for postage and handling to:

Box FDC
The Plate Number
POB 20130
Shaker Hts., OH 44120-0130

Postal inspectors check into low-value UVMs

TPN has learned that the Postal Inspection Service is investigating abuses of Postal Mailing Centers (PMCs) by postal personnel, including technicians who service the machines that dispense Universal Vending Machine Coils (UVMs).

The printing of low-value (up to 18¢) UVMs was supposedly stopped by Postal Headquarters in December, but went on, in spurts, through June. Huge profits were made by those who printed them, although postal employees appear to have been left off the gravy train.

The PMC at Oklahoma City was reprogrammed back and forth to print illicit low values until Carolyn Murphy, the USPS official in charge of vending machine sales, put a stop to it.

Later, Ms. Murphy found out that the machine at Miami Airport was continuing to sell low values when an article in *Linn's* reported that fact. On reading this in *Linn's*, Oklahoma City officials complained to Ms. Murphy along the lines of: "If you stopped us, why not them?"

Ms. Murphy was reportedly in the Norman, Okla., post office while a private order for three rolls (9,000 stamps) of low-value UVMs was being run off by postal employees. She is said to have waited until she returned to Washington before ordering Norman to stop the practice.

In late April, Ms. Murphy demanded that all PMC technicians provide her with a concise daily history of everything printed on all their machines. But the Ann Arbor, Mich., machine was spewing out low values (10¢ and up) into late May.

It should be obvious to readers of TPN that with high-priced offers being made for low-value UVMs, it was very tempting to print more of these stamps after they supposedly went out of existence.

And now there are two

The 1993 reprints of the Universal Vending Machine coils for the ECA-GARD Postal Mailing Centers (PMCs) have shiny gum.

The original stamps were printed in August 1991. The reprints were printed this year, after the new paper specifications came into force.

The new UVMs are on mottled prephosphored paper. The previous version was on solidly tagged prephosphored paper, and BEP reported that the plate from which they were printed had been canceled.

The shiny-gum UVMs have been reported, so far, from Washington, D.C., and Norman, Okla. They are also on sale

through the Philatelic Fulfillment Center.

But because the reprints generally came into use after the partial crackdown on low values, low values on shiny paper are perceived to be rare. That spurred much printing activity in Norman.

A TPN reader who obtained 15 sets of low values on shiny-gum paper said he put an offer on the ARTIS computer network for dealers on April 16 for a complete set of numbered strips from 1¢ to 18¢ on shiny paper for \$2,200. The reader was also willing to trade for an XF strip of Plate 6 of the 18¢ Flag.

The reader said he placed the announcement on the computer network after Prairie Dog Trading Co., an El Paso dealer, reneged on an advertisement in *Linn's* to sell a set from 1¢ to 18¢ for \$350.

The TPN reader said Prairie Dog asked for \$2,000.

Of his ad on ARTIS, the reader said, "I guess it was too early. Nobody yet understood what I was offering."

Prairie Dog gets a deal

TPN has learned that Prairie Dog Trading Co. in El Paso obtained three complete rolls of UVMs from Norman by mail order. Someone at Prairie Dog is reportedly a friend of the Norman postmaster.

Mail orders were barred from the start for UVMs and the Philatelic Sales Division (now called the Fulfillment Center) sold only 29¢ UVMs.

Prairie Dog's stamps, all low values, were printed by postal employees, on USPS time. The postal employees were not cut in on the profits.

One Prairie Dog roll, on which the denominations 1¢ through 6¢ were printed, was on dull-gum paper; the other two rolls were on the new shiny-gum paper. Prairie Dog offered the sets from 1¢ through 18¢ in ad in *Linn's* at \$350 for numbered strips of five.

It was when Prairie Dog learned that some of the stamps were on shiny-gum paper that it upped the price, asking the TPN reader for \$2,000 a set.

Prairie Dog's private printing was shipped to El Paso by Express Mail at USPS expense.

Apparently, more values from 1¢ to 6¢ were printed for Prairie Dog later on shiny-gum paper, enabling the firm to offer complete sets on that paper.

One set from 1¢ to 18¢—the origins of which are not known—all on shiny-gum paper, was sent to a dealer on consignment for \$1,250. The dealer, however, returned them because of suspicions that the stamps may have been illicitly pre-

pared.

A long strip of blanks, on dull-gum paper, has been reported by Dr. John Greenwood. These would seem to be blanks stolen from or supplied by a technician. Legitimate skips are only known where just one stamp was left blank.

Afraid of the modem

When people at the Norman post office learned the price Prairie Dog was charging, one of them jokingly said he would like to come in at midnight and run off some more, but he was afraid of the modem installed in the PMCs to report on the previous day's sales at midnight every day.

Condition on the shiny-gum stamps has been reported as both good and terrible. It is not yet known whether stamps sold by Philatelic Fulfillment are from select stock.

What do we collect, anyway?

TPN would like to repeat the warning from Ken Lawrence, made before the first UVMs were issued: "From the point of view of PNC collecting, only one thing counts: the plate number."

In other words, the face value of the stamps is of little importance. Paying a premium for penny stamps is illogical. Better to spend the money on high denominations, and if you're really flush, how about a numbered strip of \$99.99 stamps?

Maeder details conversion of PMCs in Coil Line

The postmaster at Monterey Park, Calif., was unhappy about the net take of only \$100 per roll of 3,000 UVMs, so he ordered the machines reprogrammed. He now nets \$1,000, although sales of rolls is at only 12% of previous levels.

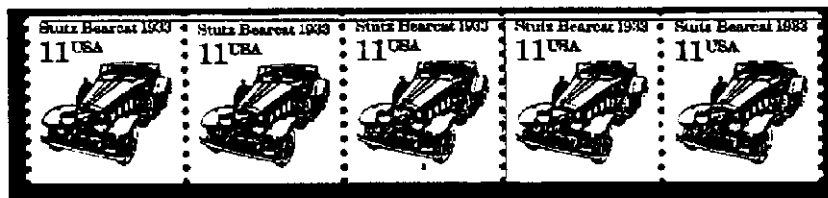
That, and other details of the slow conversion to sales of 19¢ and up, including the tale of the Prairie Dog deal, are included in an article by Tom Maeder, president of PNC³, in the June issue of *Coil Line*.

"There are fewer than 50 plate strips of 1¢-18¢ from the second (shiny gum) printing," Maeder says. "Barring a change in USPS programming policy, that is all there will be."

The quality on the shiny-gum Prairie Dog strips, Maeder says, is such that collectors previously rejected them because of poor centering. But with so few around, that would apparently become the norm. □

Part XLVI

Constant plate and mat varieties



DROPPED TRANSFER—TPN has drawn a line across the top of "Stutz Bearcat" to show the lower placement of the stamp at 2L.

By A.S. Cibulskas

1¢ Omnibus

- a. Plate 1, Cottrell. Small vertical wedge 3-4mm below and right of "s" in date. Constant at 2L. (Keller)
- b. Plate 4. Chill-roller doubling on plate number. Multiple copies submitted. (Keller)

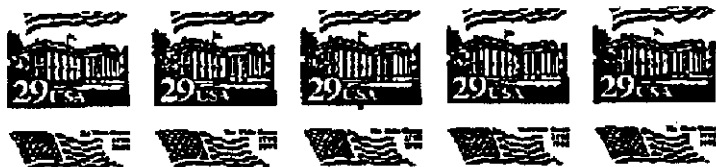
Parts of registry marks found at bottom of E&S



Al Haake has been advertising "10¢ Eagle and Shield with partial registry marks at bottom of stamp."

On a copy submitted to TPN, the two little nubs at the bottom edge were in the blue of "Bulk Rate" and were only 0.25mm high.

The stamps on which they were found were cut in such a way that the top of the eagle's head is only 1mm from the top of the stamp, but the stamp height is normal.



MISCUT IMPERF—John Tison has submitted what he believes to be the first imperforate miscut of the White House Flags. Plain imperfs are now known from Plates 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Scott Monthly offering 'Free for All'

Scott Stamp Monthly is giving away stamps, covers, and other philatelic items each month.

"We expect this new feature to become very popular," said Wayne Youngblood, the magazine's editor.

Youngblood said the value of the give-

10¢ Eagle and Shield

- a. Plate 11112. Red dot/gouge about 3mm to right of eagle's right wing near top of wing. Constant at 7L. (Keller)

11¢ Stutz Bearcat

- a. Plate 3. Dropped transfer at 2L. Constant. (Adams)

21.1¢ Letters

- a. Plate 111121, unprecanceled. Dot in margin above and right of the second "1" of the denomination. Constant at 2R. (Adams)

22¢ Flag

- a. Plate 4. Gouge resulting in a design resembling a horizontal telephone handset in the right side of the bottom margin. Constant at 2R. (Adams)

29¢ White House

- a. Plate 8. Inking variety. Blue color bleeds into red stripes affecting five upper stripes. Length of bleed varies and increases from bottom to top from slight to 3-4mm. (Lipson)

Please submit varieties to Cibulskas at 28 Westwood Rd., Stamford CT 06902. All stamps will be returned. Duplicate copies are preferred to prove constancy.

UPDATE

New stamps, new imperfs

New imperforates

- 17T4—Plate 4 of the 17¢ Electric Auto. Miscut. Number on top. Spliced. (Tison)
- 2001—Plate 1 of the 20¢ official. Numbered strip of 8 with red splice, and one strip of three. (Tison)
- 25M?—Miscut strip of the 25¢ Honeybee from top row, showing electric-eye marks above stamps. No plate number. (Tison)
- 29FIX—Plate 1 of the 29¢ Flag over the White House.
- 29F5X—Plate 5 of the 29¢ Flag over the White House. (Tison)
- 29F8X—Plate 8 of the 29¢ Flag over the White House, imperforate and miscut. (Tison)

New stamps

- 5T3ZP—Plate 3 of the 05 Canoe, rolls of 3,000. April 8. (Dr. Rabinowitz)
- 5.9T3P-1R—The 5.9¢ Bicycle from Plate 3 with the precancel gap at 1R. (Haake)
- 5.9T4P-1R—The 5.9¢ Bicycle from Plate 4 with the precancel gap at 1R. (Haake)
- 10T11—10¢ Canal Boat, Plate 1, dull gum, overall tagging (with vertical tagging break at 9R). B Press printing, plate-number interval 48. Paper 11ln. Rolls of 3,000 and 500. (Haake, Rabinowitz)

Note: Finding of 10T11 means that previous (pre-phosphored, shiny gum) stamp with that number must now be 10T11.

- 10U(A88889)P—10¢ Eagle and Shield with the numbers "A88889." Around Memorial Day. (Novak)

- 10U(A99998)P—10¢ Eagle and Shield with the numbers "A99998." June 10. (Haake/Rabinowitz)
- 10U(A99999)P—(Previously reported) The 10¢ undenominated Eagle and Shield with the numbers "A99999" in rolls of 10,000. (GClark)
- 10U11111PX—BEP version of 10¢ Eagle and Shield with numbers "11111" without prefix. Issued May 29 at Secaucus, N.J. Widely available prior to issue date.

- 10U(S11111)PY—Stamp Venturers' version of 10¢ Eagle and Shield with numbers "S11111." Issued May 29 at Secaucus, N.J. Available prior to issue date.

- 19M(A5555)VI—The 19¢ Fishing Boat with the numbers "A5555." Untagged error. See details on Page 86. About Mar 4. (Youngblood, Menia, Wolff)

- 23F(S111)PZ—The 23¢ Flag USA with the numbers "S111," indicating a printing by a new contractor, Stamp Venturers. The original stamp was printed by Guilford Gravure for American Bank Note Co. and had the numbers "A1111." About April 23. Issued at Denver, May 14. (Dr. Rabinowitz)

- 25F9IV1—Plate 9 of the prephosphored 25¢ Flag over Yosemite. Black Forest. No ski slope. (Schwartz)

- 29F6XVI—Plate 6 of the 29¢ Flag over the White House. Indigo instead of blue. (Linn's)

- (29)U1X1—The reprinted undenominated Universal Vending Machine stamp has shiny gum and is on mounted prephosphored paper. The original (29)U1X had dull gum and was on solid prephosphored paper. About April 15 in Norman, Okla., and in Washington, D.C., and Philatelic Sales Division in Kansas City. Condition reported as being "terrible." (Percels, Dr. Rabinowitz, Lipson, Lenz)

Catalog update

A complete listing of all stamps issued since appearance of the 1991 edition of *The Plate Number Coil Catalog* (seventh edition) may be found on Page 90 of this issue of TPN.

TPN corrections

Page 71—The headline "29¢ Yosemite incidences" should have said "Rushmore."

Linn's Yearbook, a font of knowledge

George Amick, Linn's U.S. Stamp Yearbook 1992, Linn's Stamp News, P.O. Box 29, Sidney, Ohio 45365. \$30 (hardcover) or \$18 (paper back)

By Stephen G. Esrati

It is absolutely uncanny how we struggle and toil to find things out when George Amick seems to have known all along.

Here we are in the July issue of *TPN*, saying that mottled prephosphored paper is prephosphored throughout while solid prephosphoring means the stamps only have a phosphor coating.

Amick knew it long ago, because that's the way he describes the 75¢ Willkie stamps, which now come both ways.

Or note how we learned only in the last issue that the 29¢ Happy New Year stamp had two different ways of adding the off-set tagging block. Amick knew that, too.

And it takes a lot longer to get a book ready for publication than it does for *TPN*.

Amick has once again done a superb job of finding out what we want to know.

Here are some of his reports as they pertain to PNCs and Great Americans:

- The 75¢ Willkie was printed on the intaglio part of the D Press. (We did not know because plate-activity reports have been stopped.) The original issue of the stamp (that's the one with dull gum) was on phosphor-coated paper, Amick said.

- The 29¢ Flower coil was printed and perforated by Stamp Venturers in Richmond, Va., then coiled and finished at Stamp Venturers in Milwaukee. We had been told in *Philatelic Release 92-003* that the printing was to be done not by Stamp Venturers but by J.W. Fergusson (which is in Richmond, Va.). We had not been told that the finishing was done at Banta Corp. (which is in Milwaukee), although it probably was. These facts should not be in dispute, but it is now impossible to find out who was right because of the Postal Service's gag on printers.

- The 29¢ Flag over the White House was printed by BEP on the C Press as well as on the intaglio portion of the D Press. (We have had no data.) Rolls of 100 were printed on a 20x48 sleeve while rolls of 500 and 3,000 were printed on an 18x48 sleeve. Until we get plate-activity data under our Freedom of Information Act request, we cannot tell which press was used for which.

- The sleeve used by Guilford Gravure for printing the 23¢ USA Flag stamps printed 456 stamps with each revolution of the 19x24 sleeve. Just before the gag rule was ordered by the Postal Service,

we learned from American Bank Note that Guilford also uses sieves with 18 stamps across, depending on roll size. Since we used a multiplier of 19 for the "maximum PNC" figures on the 10¢ undesignated Eagle and Shield, some of those figures might be too high, but without plate-activity reports we cannot tell.

- BEP, on the other hand, printed all its 23¢ USA stamps with a sleeve measuring 18x24.

- Guilford Gravure printed the gravured 5¢ Circus Wagon in the 19x24 format.

- Amick, unfortunately, fell into the trap of the untagged 10¢ Red Cloud, as did *TPN*. We now know we were lied to by Joe Peng of USPS and that the stamps are an error, not an intentionally untagged issue.

- The 19¢ Fishing Boat with plate numbers starting with "5" were also printed by Guilford Gravure in the 19x24 format.

Amick's book makes good reading.

One story concerns the Flag Over the White House Stamp, on which the denomination was left out pending the USPS appeal of the 29¢ rate set by the Postal Rate Commission. When the rate stayed at 29¢, Deborah Alexander engraved the "USA 29" into the area left blank by engraver Thomas Hipschen.

Hard as it is to believe, you can sit down and read the book with great joy.

Amick tells the two differing stories about John Sununu's role in putting a flag atop the White House. One is obviously not the truth, but Amick doesn't leave you guessing.

After saying that Sununu had told Bill McAllister of *The Washington Post* that he was not trying to design the stamp, Amick writes:

However, Donald M. McDowell, director of the Office of Stamp and Philatelic Marketing for USPS, gave a somewhat different version to *Linn's Stamp News*. McDowell said the Postal Service's "original plan was to let the engraver put the flag in and determine which way the wind should blow." ...

There's also this swipe about ABN's gravured 5¢ Circus Wagon:

A philatelic release was sent out by USPS, but not until December 14, eight days after the first day of sale.

This book should be an annual addition to your stamp library, because it is the sort of thing you go back to time and again to look up information about stamps.

The only drawback is that some of the data published for any one year never gets updated later, and there is no other source for the information, such as the number of stamps ordered printed. □

ADLETS

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

FREE: National Precancel Price List. Six pages fully illustrated. #10 SASE appreciated. Howard Moser, 1409-13th St., Highland, IL 62249. (PNC3 4-93, 1-94)

MIXTURE SORTERS: 10¢ Tractor Trailer stamps wanted on piece with privately overprinted endorsements. Pay \$2.50 each, VF. Box TT, POB 20130, Shaker Hts., OH 44120. (PNC3 4-93)

INTAGLIO PLATE 2 AND 3 plate blocks of the Happy New Year stamp wanted. Also, plate blocks showing no block tagging at all (supposedly from intaglio Plate 1). Joann Lenz, 37211 Alper Dr., Starling Hts. MI 48312-2203. (PNC3 4-93)

WANTED PS 18s: Regular Perfected XF-S, imperf, misperforated, miscut. John Tison (PNC3 473, APS, ASDA) B&J Sales, 3012 S. Crodery Way, Santa Ana, CA 92704. 1-800-854-4487. (6-93)

PNCs BY SUBSCRIPTION: My customers got the untagged Fishing Boat for \$12. It's quite simple. Subscribe to my new-issues service and get every new plate number as a PS/3 or PS/5, VF or XF I also carry Farnam, Artcraft, and Artmaster FDCs. Send \$25 deposit to Esrati, POB 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. (4-93)

JOIN PNC3 For details, write Joann Lenz, 37211 Alper Dr., Starling Hts. MI 48312-2203. (4-93)

IF YOU DESPERATELY need a 1991 PNC Catalog, you can still obtain one from Ed Denson, the PNC Specialist, PO Box 158, Alderpoint, CA 95411. Phone (707) 926-5312. (4-93)

Winner's circle and upcoming shows

Margaret Stanchfield won a silver at SANDICAL in San Diego with her Honeybee exhibit. She also took a gold with a topical exhibit called "Apillary."

Gary Davis won a silver at CIAPEX in Des Moines along with several other awards with "Postal Usages of PNCs 1981-1992." The show is not related to the Central Intelligence Agency.

Dr. Frank Shively won a silver at the March Party in Cleveland for his "Ticket Meters." He also won a silver at OKPEX in Oklahoma City for his 8.3¢ Ambulance.

Alfonse D. Ponzillo won a silver at SONEX in Cheshire, Conn. for his Great Americans. Bill McMurray won no medals but his "Tomorrow's Classics" was the most popular exhibit.

Ken Lawrence won a vermeil at ROPEX in Rochester, N.Y., for his Holocaust exhibit and Mary Ann Owens won a silver for her topical look at the Transportation Coils.

Dean Hawk's Transportation Coils won the second award at the McKinley show at Canton Ohio, along with a fistful of other awards.

Dr. Joseph Agris won a gold at the ASDA Mega Event for his private perforations of vending machine coils and a vermeil for his U.S. coil waste.

You can see some of these prize winning exhibits at shows scheduled this summer and fall:

McMurray's exhibit will be at the Omaha Stamp Show Sept. 3-4 and at AIRPEX in Dayton Ohio, Sept. 24-26. It will also be seen at the St. Louis stamp show Oct. 1-3.

Davis and Ponzillo will show their exhibits at Thamesex in New London, Conn., Oct. 24.

VARIETIES / ERRORS

TOLEDO BROWNS: Now Scott listed as 2523c. VF PS/5 #7 \$150; XF PS/5 #7 \$175. If you would like plate strips of 7, add \$8 to price.

TOLEDO BROWN SINGLES: VF \$4; XF \$4.50.

TOLEDO BROWN VARIETY: "Bald George Washington." These stamps come from rolls from Sleeve 1. The top of Washington's head is unprinted. Pairs \$29.

UNTAGGED FISHING BOAT: XF-S PS/5 A5555 \$14.50. Longer strips available. Add 50 cents per extra stamp. No-number strips, 50¢ per stamp.



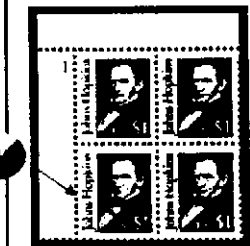
IMPERFORATE HONEYBEE.

2281a XF-S Honeybee Imperf PS/5 #1 — D Press tagging \$500

2281a XF-S Honeybee Imperf pair \$45

2280B — NEW FIND! Yosemite, black trees.

Previously known only with **BLACK** tagging from Sleeves 5 and 9. I recently acquired a few strips on **PREPHOSPHORED PAPER** from a collector. Very Scarce as the total find was 2 partial rolls of 100. The likelihood of more turning up is very remote. \$20 per stamp.



2194A — Hopkins plate variety. UL plate block of 4. One of the scarcest of the Great Americans Series. Featured on the cover of the April 1993 *American Philatelist* and first reported in *Linn's* on 7/16/90. \$175.



2523 — LENZ PAPER

(RARE) PS 5 #2 \$495

Lenz Paper singles F-VF

\$3 per stamp

2280B — Yosemite, truncated plate number Sleeve 13. PS/5 \$12

Terms: Payment with order. 15-day return if not satisfied. All orders sent postpaid.



PNC³



DAVID M. SCHWARTZ
PO BOX 762
GROTON, CT 06340

Great Americans—Specials

50¢ Nimitz, Overall tagged, dull gum, Plate 3, untagged stripe across two top stamps. PS/20, \$20; or ZIP Block of 4, \$6.50.

23¢ Cassatt, Overall tagged, Plate 2, tagging break appears at bottom of block, \$5.75.

56¢ Harvard, block tagged on phosphored paper, singles only, \$5 each. Supply very limited. Plate blocks wanted, pay \$15.

1992 Lighthouse supplements

I carry all Lighthouse albums, album supplements, binders, UV lamps, stock books, and supplies at a 15% discount. Added 5% off for members of PNC3. Call or write for details.

STEPHEN G. ESRATI

P.O. Box 20130, Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120
Telephone: (216) 561-9393 FAX: (216) 752-5002
Or, if you are on America Online, write me as StevStamps

It takes 8 stamps to make a plate block

Denis Fuller wonders what the correct size should be for collecting plate blocks of the 29¢ Jefferson.

Normally, a plate block would be the corner block of four. In this instance, being a six-position issue, I am at a loss.

On the 29¢ Warren—printed by the same printer—the plate number is in six different positions: the four sides and top center and bottom center.

The 29¢ Jefferson has the center pane's plate number in the same position on the top and bottom as on the UR and LR.

With the position-identifier block, they're easy to tell apart. But, on this issue, the identifier is four stamp positions away from the plate number. Is the correct plate block, therefore, an eight or a four? Or both?

The matched-set collector will probably need a block of eight to be able to tell the difference in positions, and the regular collector will take a block of four because position does not matter. Or does it? Are we getting into the situation we had with PNCs where we wondered whether to collect strips of three or five? Strips of three, now, are considerably lower in value than strips of five.

As a dealer, do I stock plate blocks of four or eight? What will album makers do?

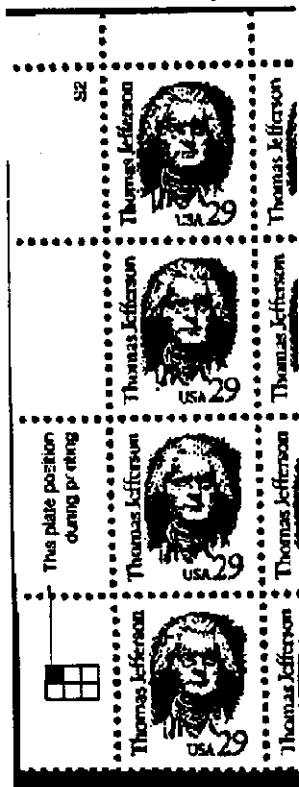
I have nothing but questions.

Fuller has posed the question and also supplied his own answer. A collector who does not want to experience the fate of the Israel collector who tore off the tabs on the first stamps of Israel because one does not collect selvage, would be wise to heed Fuller's warning about the parallel to PNCs. Despite the fact that Scott Publishing Co. refused to recognize strips of five in its catalog for many years, strips of five are the key items in most PNC collections, not strips of three.

TPN does not tell collectors how to collect. Each collector is king of his or queen of her own album. But prudence dictates that one should pay attention to selvage, especially in a case where future demands by position collectors will be for all six positions, and only blocks of eight will allow that



WHICH TWIN HAS THE TONI?—Bottom right and bottom center blocks of four are identical, but with the position-identifier block, they can be told apart.



CLOSEUP—What it looks like on UL block.

determination.

The same thing goes for the

bluish-white. He called TPN for an opinion and was asked if the stamp was used.

"Yes," he said.

Based on that, Moreau was told that it was probably a chemical chanceling that had been affected by other material in the soaking water. Moreau returned the stamp to the dealer.

But Wayne Chevery of Glen Stamps, the dealer from whom the stamps had come, sent two ruint Stravinsky singles for Moreau to examine. His accompanying note said untagged Stravinskys exist on normal (Type I) paper as well as on the high-bright paper. He said he had never seen an untagged Stravinsky on the normal paper.

The PNC Study Group had reported that the Stravinskys exist on Paper I (Plates 1, 2, 3, and 4) and Paper II (Plates 5 and 6). But a re-examination of Plates 5 and 6 shows that the paper is not Type II, but Type III.

One of the characteristics of Type II paper is that it exhibits no brighteners under long-wave UV. This paper does.

Another characteristic of Type II paper is that if held up for strong backlighting, one can see a diagonal 45-degree texture. This paper lacks any texture.

All of which would tend to prove that Chevery's stamps are on Type III paper and that he has seen it untagged only on Type III and not on Type I.

Chevery also offered Moreau two untagged copies of the 3¢ Clay, both on Type I paper, but one very high bright, the other normal. Further, he offered an untagged, high-bright 4¢ Schurz on Type I paper.

Chevery told Moreau that the 17¢ Carson exists untagged on high-bright paper, too.

Prephosphored Harvard

Scott Adams has found what looks like a 56¢ Harvard in which overall tagging was applied over the block tagging. But on closer examination, it appears that the stamps were printed on a prephosphored paper. □

blocks of six with the descriptions of the Great Americans.

These exist for:

- 5¢ Muñoz tagged
- 5¢ Muñoz untagged
- 29¢ Warren
- 35¢ Chavez
- 40¢ Chennault overall-tagged
- 40¢ Chennault prephosphored
- 52¢ Humphrey
- 75¢ Willkie (dull gum)
- 75¢ Willkie (shiny gum)

While the descriptive blocks are merely selvage, they are bound to become desirable as interest in the Great Americans Series grows and as collectors expand into new fields to conquer. Currently, they are cheap.

The sad part of all this that the Philatelic Fulfillment Center will sell position strips of 20 only on stamps with a face value of 30¢ or more. That means one must buy six Jefferson panes to get all six positions.

Scott will list the Jefferson in plate blocks of four and eight, and assigned it the number 2184B.

High-bright Stravinsky

The 2¢ Stravinsky exists on a high-bright Type III paper, as well as on Type I paper.

Ken Moreau was offered an untagged Stravinsky single, but when he looked at it under the UV short-wave lamp, it glowed

'No-yellow' Bee offered at \$1,100

Dealer B. Nolan is offering "offset yellow missing" 25¢ Honeybees at \$1,100 each, or \$2,000 a pair.

BEP had examined such stamps and reported (TPN May 1991) that it found traces of yellow ink.

BEP blamed the apparent lack of yellow on temporary ink starvation and noted that the stamps had green leaves that would have been blue in the absence of any yellow.

Nolan, however, says he has a Philatelic Foundation certificate for one pair attesting to a total lack of yellow. It may not refer to the pair being sold.

A prospective buyer was told: "If you can't see it, it ain't there. I'll guarantee it."

The prospective buyer was unwilling to bet \$2,000. □

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Great Americans Cover of Bi-Month

By Richard L. Beecher

The 6¢ Lippmann was issued in 1985 to pay no particular rate (there were adequate supplies of the 6¢ Eisenhower), so it was used primarily as a makeup stamp.

Solo usages are hard to find. On this cover, it was used to pay postage due on an envelope mailed from Canada.

In 1988, the domestic rate within Canada was 37¢, but the rate to the United States was 40¢. Underfranked mail coming from Canada is charged postage due at double the deficiency, so a single Lippmann paid it. The stamp is tied by an April 1988 Alden, N.Y., circular hand cancel.

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