

Collectors vs. Dealers

By Doug Iams

This article was at least partly triggered by Ed Gould's letter (TPN Page 117) charging price gouging on the 29¢ Mt. Rushmore "Toledo Brown."

Before I go into this, I'd like to point out that collectors need dealers (and vice-versa) and that not all dealers engage in the practices detailed below.

stated: "A new number found on the Eagle and Shield stamp A33334 by one of the dealers and the find is about the same as the A32333 and the price of \$75 will go to \$100 next week and will be at \$150 in a few weeks."

Hype!

Then they sent out a mailing postmarked Dec. 1. More than
Please turn to Page 37

Bones of contention

- Dealers' hype of higher prices ahead
- Dealers' hiding quantities found
- The bargain-basement buy at WCSE
- Buying ads seek XF; sell ads offer F-VF
- PSD sale of coils by the numbers
- Putting plate numbers on boxes
- Arrangements between dealers and clerks

Hype and reality

E&S A33334

In October, I received a postcard postmarked Oct. 1 from Stamps 'n' Stuff that

... and dealers and other collectors comment

Jerry and Barbara Koepp respond

The Koepps, who run a full-time retail stamp store in West Des Moines, are major PNC dealers. He is also an insurance executive; Mrs. Koepp minds the

store when he's on the road. He hopes to make the store his sole occupation after he retires.

We were tempted not to reply to Mr. Iams' letter because it was obvious he was not sounding off at dealers in general but seemed to have a personal dislike for us. In the case of a disgruntled collector/investor venting anger over some imagined injustice to him, it is usually best to take the high road and simply say nothing. But, in this case, we believe the insinuations and snide remarks should not stand without comment.

Ordering by plate number still not permitted

The Postal Service will not permit customers to order stamps by plate number from the Philatelic Sales Division.

This means the policy has not changed, according to Carl Burcham, product manager for philately at USPS.

It was believed that some system of ordering by numbers would be instituted when USPS asked printers to set aside a certain quantity of each printing run for the PSD.

It now appears, however, that the intent of the Postal Service was just to make

stamps of each plate number available through the philatelic agency, not that collectors or dealers would be able to order them by specific plate number.

While this means that there will be no more "unfound" numbers, such as the Eagle and Shield A12113, it still remains a lottery for collectors to obtain such scarce material from the agency.

It is, however, to be hoped that when a collector obtains a scarce number from the PSD, he or she will let others know that the number has become available. □

Dealer Hype

Newsletters or offerings without hype end up in the bottom of bird cages! When you spend \$400 to \$700 on postage and printing expenses you need something to get a reader's attention. In most cases this is information on some new issue or new number, with the facts available to us at the time we give our opinion on what we think will happen. In many cases we are right; in a few wrong—sort of like a stockbroker. Is it really necessary to place disclaimers next to every opinion? Let's take some examples:

A32333

We guaranteed customers that if the price went down in the first few months, we would refund their money or the difference. No refunds were ever needed.

A33334

We were not pleased when we found out

IN THIS 32-PAGE ISSUE

29¢ Jefferson is not Clinton's 1st stamp. Page 42
The Great Americans, stamp by stamp. Page 52

19¢ Fishing Boat.....	33	Prices	34
20¢ Flag (sheet).....	55	Tagging	50
23¢ USA (BEP).....	51	TPN Average	34
29¢ Thomas Jefferson.....	42, 44	UVMs.....	36, 42
Adlets	49	Update.....	47
All the news	48	Used singles	33
Cottrell presses	46, 51	Varieties.....	34
Covers of the Bi-Month....	51, 58		
Data bank	44, 47		
"G" stamps	42		
Gum breakers?	44		

Paid circulation this issue: 450

Please turn to Page 38

READERS WRITE ON REVEL

The following letters have been received about the mystery of Plate 2 of the \$1 Revel.

Maybe it had a swastika

I read with interest your article on the Bernard Revel secret Star of David mystery. I was especially interested in your citing a Postal Service spokesperson as saying "...the records of that period are no longer available."

After 15 years administering the Freedom of Information Act for the secretive Internal Revenue Service, and as author of *The I.R.S. and the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts of 1974* (McFarland and Co. Inc., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640), I know from experience that records no longer being available can be a very tricky claim. What does "no longer available" actually mean? It would have been easy enough to say the records were destroyed, had that been the case. Usually, "no longer available" means we don't want to give them to you, we don't want to tell you what we did with them, and we hope you won't bother us with further inquiries.

It is unlikely that the records of important fiscal transactions would have such a short retention period. Stamps, like currency or government securities, cannot be destroyed without extensive safeguards and careful recordation. Moreover, there must have been official inquiries into the Revel affair which would have given the relevant records a further life. I believe that a little insistent digging would easily solve the mystery. Why not ask some of those officials who left the USPS in the recent reduction of executives? Former bureaucrats are usually far more cooperative than their successors!

[In reply: As seen in Ken Lawrence's comments, which follow, the records exist. Ken's shipping totals strongly suggest that the Postal Service got only Plate 1 stamps, because they fulfilled the order to BEP. That would mean that Plate 2 was printed by BEP on the theory that it would be receiving a reorder that never came, and that it was BEP that destroyed the Plate 2 stamps.]

The three alternatives you suggest for throwing away a million dollars worth of assets share the assumption that the destroyed Plate 2 stamps, with or without a Star of David, were rather innocuous items. How could any executive subject to Congressional oversight and public concerns for economy justify such waste?

As a lover of conspiracy, allow me to propose a more devilish scenario. Plate 1 and 2 were both prepared before the Star of David was discovered. Discovery of the hidden star caused officials to take a more careful look at Plate 2. Plate 2 did not contain a Star of David—it contained something far worse.

Perhaps there was a hidden swastika. The curls of the

The Plate Number

and Great Americans Review

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beard might have concealed the mark of the beast—666. Or the good Rabbi might have been portrayed with horns. Now, those would have been reasons for destroying a million dollars worth of stamps and would explain why the records of their destruction were "no longer available."

It would also explain why the Star of David stamps might have been released after they were discovered, when they might just as easily have been withheld. After all, if the Plate 2 printing could be destroyed, why not also destroy Plate 1 stamps? Giving the public something mildly embarrassing to discover would have been the perfect way to hide something truly ghastly.

[In reply: Again, as Ken Lawrence makes clear below, Plate 2 had to have the same die as Plate 1 because BEP cannot make a die without having it approved by USPS. So any theory of something far worse than the Star of David must fall by the wayside.

[Furthermore, the engraver who put the Star of David into the die, Kenneth Kipperman, was unlikely to include a swastika because he apparently went berserk at the Bureau because he was somehow offended about something having to do with the U.S. Holocaust Museum, being built across the street from the Bureau.

[Belmont Faries, then editor of the *U.S. Specialist* and chairman of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee, wrote in his magazine in December 1987:

[The secret marks story first appeared in the Aug. 17, 1987, issue of *Linn's Stamp News*—a report that Kenneth Kipperman, a Bureau engraver who faced a felony charge involving a bomb threat, had told Bureau officials he had placed a Star of David in the design of the Revel stamp.]

We may never learn precisely what happened to the Plate 2 Revels or what caused their disappearance. But, after 38 years of service in city, state, and Federal government, I am certain of one thing. For every bureaucrat engaged in hiding something, there exists another bureaucrat who is maintaining a "cover your derrière" file—often it is even the same bureaucrat who feels compelled to maintain a personal file of everything he has destroyed!

I assure you, Plate 2 Revels exist. They will turn up in files at the Postal Service, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or perhaps even the Central Intelligence Agency. And they will turn up in the personal possessions of the involved bureaucrats,

Letters to the editor

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

or even clerks, congressmen, janitors, and whoever operated the shredder or the furnace.

We may either press for the truth now or wait for its eventual appearance. But it will come out and it will be far more interesting than anything yet revealed.

Marcus Farbenblum
Gambrills, Md. 21054

Cost was only \$467,362

Steve Esrati asked "What happened to Plate 2 of the ill-starred Revels?" He called this an "\$800,000 mystery," implying that the Postal Service paid that much for stamps it did not distribute.

The facts are available. There's no need to speculate on the numbers or the cost. The plate-activity reports that Esrati deftly manipulates tell only how many impressions were printed, not how many stamps were shipped. In this case, the quantity shipped is the quantity purchased by the Postal Service.

These are figures for the \$1 Revel stamp taken from official USPS fiscal year reports:

Year	Quantity	Cost
FY1986	42,390,000	\$ 67,824.00
FY1987	64,150,000	108,413.50
FY1988	112,150,000	190,655.00
FY1989	59,100,000	100,470.00
Totals	277,790,000	\$467,362.50

Thus the Postal Service actually purchased less than half the stamps reported as printed from Plate 1, at a cost of \$1.68 per thousand stamps, and had no need of any that were printed from Plate 2.

The Postal Service had ordered 250 million \$1 Revel stamps. The actual shipment was more than 10% over the order. Since typical printing contracts require buyers to accept plus or minus 10%, USPS bought more than the legal requirement. If BEP manufactured more, it was for BEP convenience in anticipation of orders that did not materialize, for which USPS bore no obligation.

Plate 2 must also have the hidden Star of David, since there's no record of a re-engraved die having been approved by the Postal Service, which only learned of the secret mark when stamp collectors did.

No \$1 Revel stamps were shipped after the \$1 Johns Hopkins stamps were available, so these figures are complete. The only real mystery is why Postal Service spokeswoman Robin Minard told Esrati that no records are available from which to learn these facts.

Ken Lawrence
Jackson, Miss.

No stamps ever printed, BEP says

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing confirms that yes, a Plate 2 of the \$1 Revel existed, but it was "never used except for experimental purposes." It was then "obliterated" so that no stamps could be printed from the "defaced" plate.

The spokesperson of the BEP was unable to say anything about the plate-activity report stating that 536.8 million Plate 2 stamps had been printed from this "experimental run." *

Pedro's World of PNCs

by Pedro Ortegón, M.D.



"Don't you think we're carrying the 'Flag over ...' concept just a little too far?"

LETTERS

Long quest for UVMs ends after much travail

I really was surprised (and somewhat pleased) to find my comments on the front page of *TPN*.

I would like to report success at last in my personal quest for the elusive UVM coils.

I was attending a professional conference in Baltimore, accompanied by my wife and our two sons. After the meeting, we planned to drive to Washington to see the sights and make some philatelic acquisitions. Before we left, I identified all four Postage and Mailing Center locations on a map.

At the General Mail Facility, I found the machine temporarily out of order. I failed to locate the Martin Luther King Jr. branch, even after driving around in circles for over half an hour. I was equally unsuccessful at the National Capitol branch, as the machine there was out of service. I was starting to get paranoid. A supervisor said the machine was down at the MLK station, but that the one at the GMF was working.

We returned there, and I was pleased and relieved to find the PMC up and running. For the next 90 minutes my son and I fed that machine a small fortune in quarters and bills, during which time we were interrupted only once by another customer.

We stopped, weighed her letter, and resumed cranking out coils. I even produced strips with sequential values, from 1¢ through 9¢, although those seemed to take a long

time.

The stamps are not what you would call beautiful. The denomination printing is of lower quality than that of the machine's cash receipt, and there is an asterisk where a dollar sign ought to be, but I'm very happy to have added them to my collection.

Nathaniel, aged 6, found the PMC easy to operate, although he got pretty bored after the first hour. I'm almost embarrassed to admit it, but I had a terrific time. So this is how a compulsive gambler must feel in front of a slot machine, unable to stop until his pockets are empty.

Stephen L. Sickerman
Winter Haven, Fla.

PNC investing

I am interested in the investment potential of my hobby and closely follow the current market price of PNCs.

One of my favorite dealers is Elmer Degon of Augusta, Maine, who publishes a quarterly price list that is very representative of the retail market in PNCs because prices rise and fall as he adjusts to his sources of supply. I find the list a reliable guide to the market.

I have been tracking the prices of 175 different PNCs on Mr. Degon's list over the past two years and recently made a statistical study of his offerings. Items added since early 1991, such as the Eagle and Shields, were excluded.

The trend of average prices over these two years, as a function of the retail price in March 1991, have been tracked in nine price ranges and are summarized below.

The price changes of all the items are significantly higher than the more specific TPN Average, with the largest rises occurring in the ranges below \$10. Price increases in the past 12 months were significantly higher than in the previous year. This probably implies a growing market interest and an improved economy.

I am inclined to believe that there is a significant investment potential in PNCs, particularly if one seeks individual items showing marked retail appreciation. I like to believe that the indicated trends of expanding collector interest and improved climate will permit the trend to continue.

Summary of Degon's price changes

\$ range	% change			No. of items
	3/91-3/92	3/92-3/93	3/91-3/93	
0-2	12.9	47.2	71.4	26
2-5	20.5	26.7	52.9	69
5-10	22.2	27.6	56.8	26
10-25	1.1	13.8	14.1	27
25-50	-6.4	18.9	10.3	15
50-100	2.8	19.7	22.7	9
100-200	-7.3	26.9	17.0	9
200-400	-15.0	24.2	5.7	4
>400	-22.9	15.7	-11.0	4

Arthur Westneat
Durham, N.H.

In reply: If one is truly tracking the investment potential of PNCs, one needs more than the prices of one dealer, which is why Ed Denson has been working so hard on his pricing data. Furthermore, just knowing these prices is still no way to track investment potential, because the key is the ability to sell at a given price. A dealer, who may be stuck with some stock many years, can eventually make his potential gain, but an "investor," lacking a market, may end up selling at only a fraction of the potential gain indicated in the writer's chart.

Toledo browns in mixtures

I was reading the letters to the editor on used Yosemite and would like to share some information.

I was recently going through a 10-pound mixture of current definitives and found—much to my surprise—two used Toledo browns, one of them with a plate number (from Plate 7).

These are the only Toledo browns used I have found in about 60 pounds I have looked through. Has anyone else found any of these used?

Daniel C. Hein
Amherst, N.Y.

Let's straighten this out

What an excellent issue of *TPN*.

The information contained in just this one issue is the most helpful found anywhere, if it can be found anywhere else.

I think a pressing problem for all members of the PNC Study Group is the differentiation between overall tagging and prephosphored paper. The great minds should lay aside personalities, combine their talents, and establish a treatise on this subject.

Eugene M. Kiehlmeier
Erie, Pa.

Defining the Canal Boat

Page 8 refers to the 10¢ Canal boat on prephosphored paper. Is that different from what we've been calling the "overall tagged" version?

E.K. Whiteman
Lynnwood, Wash.

In reply: *TPN* first heard about a used copy of these stamps and accepted the finder's description. But when mint strips were finally found, it turned out that the stamps had not been overall-tagged, but, rather, were printed on prephosphored, shiny-gum paper.

Calling them "overall tagged" is incorrect.

Why are Linn's 'Trends' included in TPN Average?

I haven't quite figured out the statistical fluke. Does this mean you use Linn's "Trends" as one of your "dealers' prices?" If so, doesn't this mean that any dealer used for "Trends" appears twice in the TPN Average, while dealers not used by them only appear once? How does one rationalize factoring in dealers A, B, and C twice but dealers D and E only once?

I guess that you write some things just to generate some mail and assume that the Newark German Hospital comment was one of them. I cannot find any place where we say that the stamp pictures the hospital.

William W. Cummings
Catalogue Editor
Scott Publishing Co.

In reply: You are quite right. The TPN Average does include Linn's "Trends."

I do not pretend that the average is made up only of dealers' price lists and have repeatedly said over the years that "Trends" is included. The rationale for this is that the average is supposed to reflect "the market." Since many dealers use "Trends" as their price list, it seems the right way to go.

I looked at the "Newark German Hospital" entry again and found that what it really said was "Newark German Hospital Pin." The pin does show on the stamp. I apologize to Scott's and to Bill Cummings.

Gum colors differ on gravured Canoe

On the new Circus Wagon, have you noticed the difference in the color of the gum? To me, one (A2) seems to be white and the other (A1) off white. The paper on A2 also seems to be lighter than A1.

The first issue of the Circus Wagon by the BEP seems to differ from the gravured version only in that the early issue has dry gum while that from American Bank Note has shiny gum.

Alphonse D. Ponzillo
Waterbury, Conn.

In reply: You are right in spotting the difference in the gum between BEP's and ABN's, but there are other differences between BEP's intaglio and ABN's gravured. The most striking is in the shading at the left side of the wagon. The intaglio stamp has very fine diagonal lines, so fine in some places that the lines almost disappear. On the gravured version, the diagonal lines are thick and uniform. On BEP's stamp, the top of the "W" in "Wagon" has 0.75mm-wide serifs, while the ABN serifs measure only 0.5mm.

As to the difference between the paper used on A1 and A2, the American Bank Note Co. says the entire issue was printed on paper with the same specifications. That, of course, still leaves variations from one roll to another.

Light and dark Great Americans

The Great Americans study makes me think, "Why is this or that?" and "Is it sometimes or all the time?"

I notice you did not mention the light and dark 1¢ Mitchell. Michael Karen has a price list with normal inking and light inking. And what about the 5¢ Black in light and dark? Also, the 6¢ Lippmann.

Should I just disregard this "fleyspeck" stuff?

The 15¢ Cody is the only stamp I've seen the short, stubby electric-eye marking on. It's on Plate 2 with overall tagging.

Finally, could you let me have a good description of the different types of paper?

Carol Morehouse
Carlsbad, Calif.

In reply: Your first paragraph is a humdinger! At this point, we haven't got a clue whether something is important or unimportant, whether it is constant or furtive, whether it is significant or not. As we learn more, partly from readers like you, we'll be able to make some guesses.

As to the light and dark inkings. When we were concerned only with PNCs, we paid little or no attention to inking freaks because they are not constant. We have noticed the dark-light phenomenon on the Great Americans, including the 25¢ London, but don't yet know what to make of it. The general advice in philately, however, is that if you see something, save it.

The Cody plate with the stubby electric-eye lines is off the C Press. The question now is whether other C Press Greats also have such lines.

As to the paper types, we plan to publish a summary of that in our next issue. Meanwhile, you should try to beg, borrow, or steal a copy of the descriptions given in the

1991 PNC Catalog, which is out of print. Perhaps you can get a photocopy from another collector.

Let's expand the Great Americans data

The project you are undertaking for the Great Americans issues is a good task, but shouldn't end with only the eight columns in the charts.

I believe you should also include areas such as hi-brite paper, tag shifts, hot lines, and, for example, the mottled tagging commonly found on 20¢ Truman and 5¢ Muñoz Marin.

For the last five years I have been finding and doing just this same project for all U.S. issues since 1958-59. Not only do I find these area of tagging, but I have photographed them in color under longwave and shortwave UV. These pictures show the tagging characteristics. The photos are mounted on a regular-size page with the pertinent data. This page becomes my album page for each variety. Then the photographed subjects are mounted just above the photo.

I have been reporting this information to Wayne Youngblood and H. Harry Mueggenburg. I would be glad to include *TPN*.

Bruce Menia
Selkirk, N.Y.

In reply: For the time being, while we are still learning the fundamentals of the Great Americans, it may be best to postpone consideration of tagging oddities. There's still too much to be done on paper types, tagging breaks, and

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	3, 4	1.20	1.30	1908	20¢ Pumper 1	6.30	38.50
1897A	2¢ Loco 3, 4	0.35	0.40		2	35.00	
1898	3¢ Handcar 1, 2	0.55	0.80		3, 4, 13, 15, 16	3.35	3.50
2124	4.5¢ Buckboard 3, 4	1.00	1.05		5, 9	1.75	2.95
1899	5¢ M' cycle 1-4	0.55	1.45		7, 8	143.00	144.00
1900	5.2¢ Sleigh 1, 2	3.85	7.00		6, 12, 14	5.60	5.60
1901	5.9¢ Bicycle 3, 4	4.20	9.10		11	50.50	52.60
1901A	5.9¢ PC 3, 4	22.00		2005	20¢ Consumer 1, 2	4.55	37.50
2126	6¢ Tricycle 1	2.55			3, 4	4.55	37.50
2127	7.1¢ Tractor 1	2.55		1895	20¢ Flag 1	5.50	
1902	7.4¢ Baby Buggy 2	5.50	6.30		2, 11, 12	7.55	10.00
2128	8.3¢ Ambulance 1, 2	1.25	1.40		3	3.35	3.50
2129	8.5¢ Tow Truck 1	3.00	3.50		4	37.50	65.00
1903	9.3¢ Mail Wag 1, 2	6.30	7.00		5, 9, 10, 13, 14	2.75	4.00
	3, 4	26.80	28.20		8	5.45	5.60
	5, 6	154.00		0135	20¢ Official 1	10.50	25.00
2130	10.1¢ Oil Wagon 1	1.50	2.10	2150	21.1¢ 111111	3.00	3.15
1904	10.3¢ Hansom 1, 2	9.10	16.00		111121	4.05	4.40
1905	11¢ Caboose 1	3.15	3.35	2115	22¢ Flag 1, 7	5.45	14.50
2131	11¢ Stutz 3, 4	0.55	1.40		5, 10	6.85	7.00
2133	12.5¢ Pushcart 1	2.65	2.80		2, 3, 15, 16, 19, 22	4.00	4.10
2134	14¢ Iceboat 1-4	1.40	2.40	0139	22¢ "D" Official 1	35.00	50.00
1906	17¢ Auto 1-4	1.80	3.10	2135	25¢ Yos. Block 2, 3	3.00	4.20
2135	17¢ Dogset 2	2.75	3.00		4, 5, 8	3.80	4.20
1907	18¢ Sundry 1	61.00			Phos. 2, 3, 7-11,	4.00	4.25
	2, 5, 6, 8	2.65	4.00		13, 14	4.00	4.25
	3, 4	35.00		2279	"E" Earth 1111, 1222	2.10	2.45
1891	18¢ Flag 2	19.00	25.40	2281	25¢ Honeybee 1, 2	2.10	2.45
	4	6.30	6.65	2518	"F" Tulip 1111, 1222	3.50	4.00
	5	3.50	4.70		2222	3.50	4.00
	7	38.00	38.55	2523A	Gravure A11111	3.50	4.00
2149	18¢ Wash 1112	2.75	3.00	2690	25¢ White House 5	4.50	5.00

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even the basic data on such things as electric-eye markings. Once we are comfortable with the completeness and accuracy of these basic data, we may consider expanding the coverage.

Why give Dr. Bob a break? Include me in!

I am a subscriber of *TPN* and a PNC dealer. When I read that you were calling a halt to the "battle," I was pleased. You offered to let Dr. Rabinowitz mail out a response to all your subscribers and I thought that was more than fair on your part. Imagine the total and utter shock I received when I opened his letter only to find his price list inside and some cockamamie excuse for not mailing out his reply.

In life, if you are going to take a stand on a topic, you must be prepared to take criticism for your stand. Dr. Bob's stand for not mailing what he promised was that he did not want to offend anyone. Big deal! But to mail out his price list?

As a dealer and subscriber, I request equal and fair treatment. Please forward to me a set of labels so I may mail out my price list to the subscribers of *TPN*. What has prompted this request is that several of my customers are subscribers to *TPN* and they felt you were endorsing Dr. Bob by permitting him to mail his price list. I am confident that it was not your intention to convey an endorsement of Dr. Bob, especially since you are a dealer also. But the damage is done. The subscribers of *TPN* have received his price list. I am at a distinct financial disadvantage and

the only way to rectify this injustice is to permit me to do a mailing.

Denison E. Fuller
Fuller Stamps
Lancaster, S.C.

In reply: Mr. Fuller has been mailed a set of labels at cost.

Sweepstakes mailing

Several months ago I called an accountable paper clerk outside the Chicago area to ask her to check her stock of Eagle and Shields. She said she was not selling these stamps to collectors anymore because their supply was low.

She said a mailer had wanted to buy 20 million E&S stamps for a mailing for Publisher's Clearing House. She was unable to supply these stamps.

Later, I found a cover from Publisher's Clearing House with an A33335.

William F. Castle
Evanston, Ill.

In reply: There has been a national shortage of E&S stamps, which is why the Postal Service relaxed the rules on the use of the 10¢ Tractor Trailer.

Prephosphored or overall tagged?

I have had problems with the 23¢ Cassatt varieties. I tried my longwave UV lamp, and found the following:

- Both overall-tagged and prephosphored paper look pretty much alike in shortwave UV. (I do not collect plate blocks, but keep regular blocks for variations in tagging, perforation, etc., and therefore do not keep the selvage.)

- The prephosphored types of the 10¢ Red Cloud and the 23¢ Cassatt show a faint but distinct purple glow under longwave UV. The overall-tagged does not.

If my analysis is correct, then there should also be a prephosphored 15¢ Cody.

Wolfgang Elser
Alexandria, Va.

In reply: Nice try, but no cigar! *TPN* attempted to repeat this method on known copies (with untagged areas of selvage to prove overall tagging) and found no such distinction in longwave UV.

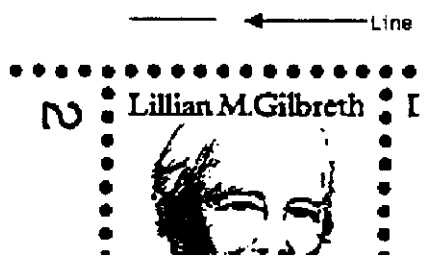
Line on A Press stamps

Are the little lines above and below the four plate block positions electric-eye marks?

They're also above and below the ZIP block.

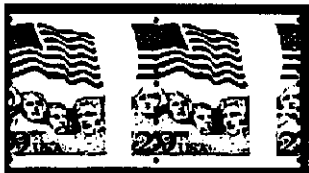
Ken Moreau
Franklin, Mass.

In reply: We'll leave this one to



our knowledgeable readers. Our guess is that they are cutting marks to separate panes, but they could still be there to activate an electric-eye mechanism that does the cutting.

BUYING ERRORS



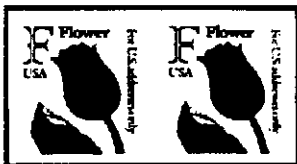
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APS

BIA

Used singles *They all eventually show up in mixtures and are not related in price to roll size*

By Ken Lawrence

The comment (*TPN*, Page 124) about the used singles market is absurd. Do you think that stamps issued in coils of 3,000 and 10,000 don't get used? That's ridiculous! They get used in the proportions issued, just like any other stamps. If they weren't needed, they wouldn't be issued.

Impatient collectors pay mint prices for "used" (favor canceled) stamps, but most don't. Those who are willing to wait can get genuinely used examples of nearly every PNC. Market prices are not a function of the ease with which dealers obtain mint strips of some numbers.

USPS issues coil stamps in four formats: rolls of 100, 500, 3,000, and 10,000. Nearly all get used on mail, but each has its own characteristic user(s).

Coils of 100 are typically sold to individual household users. Coils of 500 are typically used by small businesses. Coils of 3,000 are typically used by people who buy single stamps from USPS vending machines, but also by mass mailers. Coils of 10,000 are used only by mass mailers.

Typical recipients also vary. Utilities, banks, insurance companies, and retail mail-order firms receive a disproportionate amount of mail from household bill payers, so collectors who have access to such covers will find a disproportionate number of PNCs from 100- and 3,000-stamp coils.

Courthouses, law offices, wholesale firms, and government agencies have a higher proportion of mail from small business and professional offices, so their

covers have a higher percentage of stamps from 500-stamp coils.

Collectors who have access to such mail get an early read on those proportions, but not on other usages. The reports are also biased by limited geographical scope in most cases. There is no central source of PNC covers from coils of 10,000, because they typically go to individual households from large commercial firms. Dumpster divers are often the first to discover what exists, but not the quantities and proportions.

Eventually these all show up in kiloware, but it takes time—usually about a year after a prime rate stamp is issued, and two years after a bulk rate stamp is issued—for PNCs to show up in mixtures. Mail order PNC dealers who offer used stamps can't wait that long, but there are only a few of those, and they are not typical of the market. To see the real market, look at the stocks of used PNCs at weekend bourses. Most that I've seen use *Linn's* "Trends" as the basis for their pricing.

That's for prices of individual plate singles. Most Flag PNCs are packet material. They are so common that even most "scarce" numbers exist in quantities far in excess of collector needs. Thus most individual used single prices on Flag PNCs are a dealer's minimum handling charge, not a market level. Until a couple of years ago, that was also true of older prime rate Transportation coils, but the market seems finally to have absorbed them.

To get a good feel for this, sign up for the APS U.S. Plate Number Singles sales

circuit, by far the largest marketplace for used PNCs.

The used singles market coincides with the mint strip market at just two points— for any new number during the period before it appears in common mixtures, which usually means the first year or two after the initial find, and for every PNC that is strictly a philatelic issue, such as unprecanceled fractionals.

In other instances, factors that determine floor and ceiling prices are set in ways that differ significantly from operation of the mint market, sometimes even its very opposite, especially PNCs that are known to occur only in large rolls.

The best thing about the market for used PNCs is that it is real, and not subject to manipulation that often determines mint strip prices.

Catalog prices and market-basket averages ought to be based on actual markets, not the wishful thinking and fanciful theories of dealers in mint stamps. □

[*Editor's note:* While all of the above is true, it does not explain why *Linn's* "Trends" prices some used singles higher than dealers are asking for mint pairs.

Here are three random examples, using stamps that the mixture pickers have had a chance to find:

Stamp	<i>Linn's</i>	Stamps 'n' Stuff pair
5.2T1	9.00	3.85
9.3T1	10.00	6.30
10.9T1	16.00	13.00
Stamp	<i>Linn's</i>	Dr. Rabinowitz pair
5.2T2	9.00	4.50
9.3T2	10.00	6.75
10.9T2	16.00	13.00

A5555 Fishing Boats differ in plate-number interval, appearance

When the 19¢ Fishing Boat was issued in 1991, printing was done by Multi-Color Corp., of Scottsburg, Ind., as subcontractor for American Bank Note Co.

Multi-Color used solvent-based ink on a Schiavi Press with a plate-number interval of 36.

When the new A5555 Fishing Boats appeared, they had a 24-stamp interval, a sure-fire indication that ABN had reprinted the stamp on an Andreotti press at Guilford Gravure, of Guilford, Conn.

One wholesaler, thinking the numbers were 36 stamps apart, paid a stripper based on that interval. When informed that the numbers were only 24 stamps apart, he exclaimed: "Shoot! I paid too much."

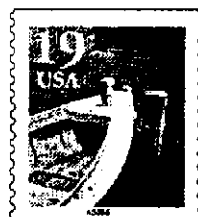
But that's not all. The Schiavi Press stamps looked unlike the reprints.

On the original stamps, if you look closely, you will find no solid colors, only little dots of color.

You won't see any difference with the naked eye, but under a magnifying glass, the new stamps appear to have solid colors, almost as if they had been printed by offset, even though both stamps have been printed by photogravure, using four-color process printing.

The explanation is that ABN shifted production from Multi-Color, which destroyed all its plates. The new plates were made at Guilford, using a mechanical engraving process. Multi-Color's was chemically etched.

In addition, Guilford, being in Connecticut, is barred from using solvent-based inks, so it printed the stamps using water-based inks.



Additionally, Ken Lawrence points out that the new stamps are on paper to which optical whiteners have been added, making them fluoresce in long-wave UV.

Because the stamps can be differentiated as singles, even without a plate number, the new stamps should have a different *Scott Catalog* number.

For the *Plate Number Coil Catalog*, the new stamps are simply 19M(A5555). □

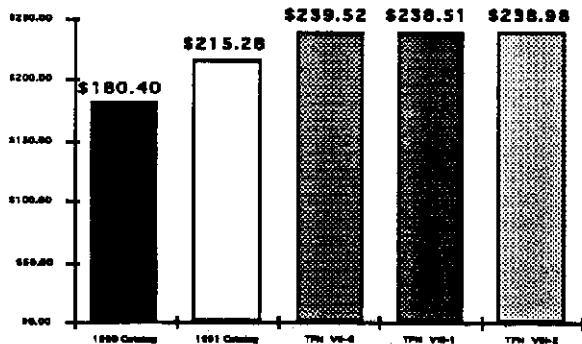
Average dealers' prices on E&S stamps Updated to Feb. 2, 1993

Number	PS/3	PS8	Number	PS/3	PS8
11111	\$2.98	\$3.27	34426	\$4.74	\$5.00
11112	\$3.04	\$3.27	43324	\$4.93	\$5.12
12213	\$16.17	\$17.09	43325	\$3.87	\$4.14
21112	\$2.98	\$3.27	43326	\$3.87	\$4.20
21113	\$4.66	\$4.93	43334	\$3.20	\$3.48
22112	\$2.98	\$3.27	43335	\$3.20	\$3.48
22113	\$2.90	\$3.18	43426	\$4.82	\$5.05
32333	\$194.00	\$193.29	53335	\$3.98	\$4.14
33333	\$5.71	\$5.95	54444	\$4.21	\$4.48
33334	\$91.70	\$94.20	54445	\$4.21	\$4.48
33335	\$4.64	\$4.91	77777	\$3.39	\$3.34
34424	\$4.74	\$5.00	88888	\$3.38	\$3.33

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

Prices have not been adjusted for condition as they are for prices in the TPN Average. Most dealers are out of 32333.

TPN AVERAGE



Price changes of strips in TPN Average

CATALOG	SERIES	FACE	PLATE	TPN V8-1	TPN V8-2	% Change
18F1	FLAG	18	1	\$510.65	\$512.42	0.35%
18F3	FLAG	18	3	\$1,176.02	\$1,176.02	0.00%
20F4	FLAG	20	4	\$889.70	\$889.70	0.00%
20F11	FLAG	20	11	\$13.72	\$13.72	0.00%
22F1	FLAG	22	1	\$16.50	\$16.81	1.88%
22F3	FLAG	22	3	\$63.08	\$63.95	1.39%
25F5	FLAG	25	5 Block	\$5.50	\$5.58	1.45%
25F5F	FLAG	25	5 Phos	\$11.06	\$11.29	2.06%
29F1	FLAG	29	1	\$5.81	\$5.81	0.00%
29F1X	WH FLAG	29	1	\$5.83	\$5.83	0.00%
5.2T3	TRANS	5.2	3	\$201.02	\$201.02	0.00%
5.2T4P	TRANS	5.2	4	\$17.74	\$17.74	0.00%
5.9T3P	TRANS	5.9	3	\$29.49	\$29.74	0.86%
5.9T6P	TRANS	5.9	6	\$98.19	\$98.66	0.48%
7.4T2	TRANS	7.4	2	\$12.95	\$13.03	0.62%
8.4T3P	TRANS	8.4	3	\$23.83	\$23.98	0.63%
9.3T1P	TRANS	9.3	1	\$18.84	\$18.84	0.00%
9.3T6	TRANS	9.3	6	\$317.79	\$323.54	1.81%
9.3T8P	TRANS	9.3	8	\$216.63	\$217.95	0.61%
10.9T1P	TRANS	10.9	1	\$39.68	\$38.86	-2.06%
10.9T4P	TRANS	10.9	4	\$423.55	\$423.55	0.00%
17T6	TRANS	17	6	\$21.13	\$21.29	0.76%
17T6P	TRANS	17	6	\$55.58	\$57.30	3.10%
18T1	TRANS	18	1	\$110.23	\$110.23	0.00%
18T3	TRANS	18	3	\$88.18	\$88.18	0.00%
18T17	TRANS	18	17	\$7.35	\$7.27	-1.10%
20T1	TRANS	20	1	\$196.01	\$196.01	0.00%
20T2	TRANS	20	2	\$1,096.24	\$1,096.24	0.00%
20T7	TRANS	20	7	\$181.39	\$181.39	0.00%
20T11	TRANS	20	11	\$100.82	\$100.82	0.00%
20T12	TRANS	20	12	\$12.59	\$12.37	-1.74%
10U/A33333P	E&S	10	33333	\$6.77	\$6.84	1.02%
19M A1112	FISH	19	1112	\$12.43	\$12.43	0.00%
29U 1211	F	29	1211	\$36.14	\$36.14	0.00%
20M1	CONS	20	1	\$233.65	\$233.65	0.00%
20M3	CONS	20	3	\$140.74	\$140.74	0.00%
20a1	OFFICIAL	20	1	\$67.01	\$67.77	1.13%
22a1	OFFICIAL	22	1	\$91.66	\$91.66	0.00%

Sale undercuts E&S price

The prices we list this month for the Eagle & Shield stamps are not satisfactory because Dr. Robert Rabinowitz has been running a sale in his *Linn's* ads. According to Dr. Rabinowitz these are introductory prices, intended to solicit new customers, "not my regular prices."

But the \$84 price in the ad for A33334 is a fraction of the \$112 price in his latest price list. It also would have lowered the average price in the adjacent table, but we used his list price as opposed to his sale price.

Anyway, the recent large changes in prices have not been in the E&S stamps but in some that we have rarely paid much attention to.

Ed Denson, a member of the PNC Study Group and a PNC dealer, now publishes a price review of all PNCs. The subscription price is \$100 a year, and the publication lists not just price averages but also prices of individual dealers, pointing to who is charging the least for every PNC.

Denson also lists the index price for each strip and allows a handy way of finding the strips that have risen the most in the past year or over many other shorter periods.

Out of this mass of data, Denson thinks it possible not only to find bargains but also to spot strips that are appreciating in price.

The following is a complete list of strips Denson has found to have gone up more than 50% in 1992.

4¢ Stagecoach, precancel, Plates 5 and 6	104%
4¢ Stagecoach, re-engraved, overall tagging	333%
5.5¢ Star Route Truck, Plate 1	68%
7.1¢ Tractor, original precancel	57%
7.4¢ Baby Buggy precancel	51%
8.4¢ Wheelchair, Plate 3	68%
12¢ Stanley Steamer, precancel, re-engraved	57%
18¢ Surrey, Plates 3 and 4	134%
19¢ Fishing Boat, A1212	112%
20¢ Fire Pumper, Plate 8	74%
25¢ Flag (Yosemite) Plate 1 phosphored	408%
29¢ "F" 1211	75%

Denson has put much effort into his publication and it highly recommended for anyone who wants to follow prices closely, especially those who seek to invest in PNCs. □

Plate and mat varieties—XLIV

By A.S. Cibulskas

Correction to Report 43 (January TPN)

29¢ Flag Over White House

a. Plate 6: Inking variety: The bottom part of the plate number is missing. Constant. (Cibulskas) Reported erroneously as Plate 4.

New reports

29¢ Flag over Mt. Rushmore

a. Plate 8: Butt splice at 4L. Manila tape on back. (Lipson)

29¢ Flag over White House

a. Plate 3: Inking variety: The numeral "1" is missing from both dates, "1792" and "1992." Numerous consecutive examples, including plate-numbered strips, were found. This inking variety had been previously reported on Plate 4. (Novak)

b. Plate 7: Inking variety: Bottom half of vertical portion of the plate number is missing. The same phenomenon had previously been reported on Plates 3, 4, and 6. (Thomson)

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15% off on plate strips on all orders over \$25.00

We have all new numbers as soon as they come out.

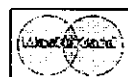
LP	PS3	PS6	LP	PS3	PS6	LP	PS3	PS6
1897 1st Bus 1, 2, 5, 6	20	30	2132a 12x PC 1, 2	2.50	2.75	1895 20x Flag 8	5.45	5.60
3, 4	1.20	1.30	2132b 12x B Press PC 1	22.00	23.00	5, 9, 10, 13, 14	2.75	4.00
2225 1x B Press 1, 2	40	50	2133 12.5x Pushcart 1, 2	2.65	2.80	1895a 20x PC 14	60.00	60.00
2225a untagged 2	1.00	1.25	2133a PC 1, 2	3.90	4.00	0135 20x Official 1	10.50	25.00
1897a 2x Loco 3, 4, 8, 10	35	40	2258 13x Patrol Wagon 1	2.75	3.00	2253 20x Cable Car 1, 2	3.25	3.75
2, 6	60	65	2259 13.2x Coal Car 1, 2	2.75	3.00	2253b Overall tagged 2	3.25	3.75
2225 3x Loco B Press 1	85	90	2134 14x Iceboat 1, 2, 3, 4	1.40	2.40	2254 20.5x Fire Engine 1	3.25	3.75
1896 3x Handcar 1, 2, 3, 4	55	80	2134b B Press 2	2.80	3.90	2255 21x Rail Car 1, 2	3.25	3.75
2252 3x Conestoga 1, 2	80	90	2250 15x Tugboat 1, 2	2.50	2.80	2150 21.1x 111111	3.00	3.15
2123 3.4x School Bus 1, 2	70	1.00	2250a Overall tagged 2	3.50	3.80	111121	4.05	4.40
2123a 3.4x PC 1, 2	9.00	9.50	2251 16.7x Popcorn 1, 2	4.00	4.40	2150a 21.1x PC 111111, 111121	3.85	3.85
1898a 4x Coach 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5	2.00	2.25	1906 17x Auto 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1.80	3.10	2115 22x Flag 1, 7, 13	5.45	14.50
1898Ab 4x PC 3, 4, 5, 6	9.00	9.50	6	17.00	17.50	3	10.50	14.00
2225 4x B Press 1	1.00	1.20	7	4.90	5.00	5, 6, 10	6.85	7.00
2225a overall tagged 1	19.00	19.50	1906a 17x PC Type A, 3, 4, 5	4.90	5.00	14	25.50	26.00
2451 4x Carriage 1	1.00	1.20	Type A, 6, 7	10.00	12.50	2, 4, 8, 12, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22, T1	4.00	4.10
2451a same, untagged	2.00	2.25	Type AB, 5, 7 PS10 only	—	—	11, 17, 18, 20	5.95	8.30
2124 4.9x Backboard 3, 4	1.00	1.05	Type B, 3, 4	18.20	18.90	2112 22x "D" Eagle 1, 2	4.75	5.10
2124a PC 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	2.00	2.25	Type B, 5, 6	10.00	13.50	0139 22x "D" Official 1	35.00	50.00
1899 5x Micycle 1, 2, 3, 4	55	145	Type BA, 5, 6	—	—	2464 23x Lunch Wagon 2, 3	3.25	3.75
2253 5x Milk Wagon 1	100	1.10	Type C 1, 2	9.50	9.85	2607 23x Flag A111, 212, 222	3.25	3.75
2452 5x Circus Wagon 1	100	1.10	Type C 3, 4	10.00	10.75	A112	9.00	9.50
2452a untagged 1	1.60	1.65	Type C 5, 7	21.00	22.00	A122, 333	4.50	5.00
Same, gravured A1, A2	1.60	1.85	2135 17x Dogshad 2	2.75	3.00	NEW 23x USA A1111, A2222	3.50	4.00
2453 5x Carole 1	1.00	1.10	2262 17.5x Racer 1	3.00	3.50	BEP version 1111	3.50	4.00
2	1.80	1.90	2262a 17.5x PC 1	3.00	3.50	2266 24.1x Tandem 1	3.90	4.20
2454 gravured S11	1.60	1.65	1907 18x Surrey 1	61.00	90.00	2136 25x Bread Wagon 1, 2, 3, 4	2.65	2.80
1900 5.2x Sleigh 1, 2	3.85	7.00	2, 5, 6, 8	2.85	4.00	5	3.35	3.50
3, 5	135.00	165.00	3, 4	35.00	75.00	2280 25x Yosemite		
1900a PC 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	11.00	13.00	7	21.00	38.00	Block 1, 7	7.00	8.00
2254 5.3x Elevator 1	1.15	1.20	11, 12, 15, 16	9.30	16.00	Block 2, 3, 4, 5, 8	3.80	4.20
2125 5.5x Star Truck 1	2.80	2.90	9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18	6.30	7.00	Block 9	10.00	11.00
2125a 5.5x PC 1	2.05	2.15	1891 18x Flag 1	120.00	140.00	Phos 1	48.00	49.00
PC 2	2.60	2.80	2	19.80	29.40	Phos 2-3, 7-11, 13-14	4.00	4.25
1901 5.9x Bicycle 3, 4	4.20	9.10	3	360.00	362.50	Phos 5, 15	6.00	7.00
1901a 5.9x PC 3, 4	22.00	32.00	4	6.30	6.65	Phos 6	14.00	15.00
PC 5, 6	59.50	88.00	5	3.50	4.70	2279 "E" Earth 1211	4.75	4.90
2126 6x Tricycle 1	1.20	1.50	6	WANT	1,800.00	2,700.00	2222	5.00
2126a PC 1	2.30	2.40	7	38.00	38.55	1111, 1222	2.10	2.30
PC 2	7.55	8.65	2149 18x Wash. 1112, 3333	2.75	3.00	2281 25x Honeybee 1, 2	2.10	2.45
2127 7.1x Tractor 1	2.55	2.60	2149a 18x PC 3333 & dull	4.00	4.50	1 Orig. full set	36.00	31.50
2127a PC 1	4.00	4.25	PC 11121, 43444	5.75	6.15	2518 "F" (29x) Tulip		
2127b PC 1 "ZIP-4"	2.55	2.60	2529 19x Boat A1112, 1212	10.00	10.25	1111, 1222, 2222	3.50	4.00
1902 7.4x Baby Buggy 2	5.60	6.30	A1111, 2424, 5555	3.25	3.75	1211	39.00	39.50
1902a PC 2	5.00	5.50	1908 20x Pumper 1	6.30	39.50	2211	8.00	8.50
2255 7.6x Carrel 1, 2	1.75	2.50	2	35.00	260.00	2525 29x Flower S1111, 2222 Sil.	3.50	4.00
3	6.00	6.50	3, 4, 13, 15, 16	3.35	3.50	S2222 (Perf.)	4.00	4.50
2128 8.3x Ambulance 1, 2	1.25	1.40	5, 9, 10	1.75	2.05	2523 29x Mt. Rushmore		
2128a 8.3x PC 1, 2	1.25	1.40	7, 8	143.00	144.00	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	3.50	4.00
PC 3, 4	5.35	5.50	12, 14 XF	14.00	15.40	6 on Lenz Paper	110.00	110.00
2231 Amb. B Press 1, 2	3.50	3.75	6, 12, 14	5.60	5.60	7 Toledo brown	150.00	150.00
2256 8.4x Wheelchair 1, 2	2.50	2.75	11	50.50	52.60	5, 8, 9	8.50	8.75
3	24.00	24.50	2005 20x Consumer Ed. 1, 2	4.55	37.50	2523a gravure A11111, A22211	3.50	4.00
2129 8.5x Tow Truck 1	3.00	3.50	3, 4	4.55	37.50	2690 29x White House		
2129a PC 1	3.50	3.60	1895 20x Flag 1	5.60	8.00	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	4.50	5.00
2	13.00	13.50	2, 11, 12	7.55	10.00	2468 31 Seaplane	5.00	6.00
1903 9.3x Mail Wagon 1, 2	6.30	7.00	3	3.35	3.50	Variable Rate Shield (UVM)		
3, 4	26.80	28.20	4	37.80	65.00	1x-10x	20.00	19x-29x
5, 6	154.00	320.00	6	90.00	95.00			10.00
1903a PC 1, 2	16.00	17.00						
PC 3, 4	29.00	30.00						
PC 5, 6	3.00	3.20						
PC 8	190.00	195.00						
2257 10x Canal Boat 1	1.30	1.40						
Photochromed, shiny gum	3.00	3.20						
2457 10x Tractor Trailer 1	1.30	1.40						
2604 (10x) Eagle, Shield								
A11111, 11112, 21112, 22112, 22113, 43334, 43335, 53335, 7777	3.30	3.40						
A21113, 33333, 33335, 34424, 34426, 43324, 43325, 43326, 43426, 54444, 54445	4.75	4.85						
A12213	25.00	25.00						
A32333	225.00	225.00						
A33334	No discounts	85.00						
2130 10.1x Oil Wagon 1	1.60	2.10						
2130a Black PC 1, 2	2.50	2.65						
2130b Red PC 2, 3	2.55	2.65						
1904 10.9x Hansom 1, 2	9.10	16.00						
1904a PC 1, 2	13.00	33.00						
3, 4	45.50	262.50						
19051 1x Caboose 1	3.15	3.35						
1905a Caboose PC 1	3.80	4.00						
Untagged 2	2.00	2.25						
2131 11x Stutz 1, 2, 3, 4	55	140						

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Low-value UVMs go way of the dinosaur—but slowly

Reprogramming the Postal Mailing Centers so they could dispense no stamps worth less than 18¢ went no more smoothly than any other aspect of this experiment.

The machines in the Detroit area were changed first. Norman, Okla., was next. Slowly, however, all the machines were supposed to be reprogrammed.

In Norman, in fact, the machines were reprogrammed three times. After one customer successfully complained about the lack of notice, the machine dispensed 1¢ stamps again. Later, when other collectors heard about this, they tried to get the bargains, too, but the machines had been switched back again to the 19¢ minimum.

When the technician at Monterey Park, Calif., was sent his new program, he was told that his was the last to be sent out.

The Postal Service made the change because collectors were buying 1¢ stamps between plate-numbered strips, losing money on the transaction.

The news of the change in the machines caused a rush by collectors trying to obtain numbered strips of all the low denominations that were to be taken off sale. Dealers quickly raised prices on low denominations.

The technician at Monterey Park also gave Tom Maeder a progress report on that machine, which had gone through seven printing units from August to Christmas. He said he hated to take out the sixth unit "because it's the best one we've had. It printed 60,000 stamps."

It would seem a measure of the PMC's quality that printing 20 rolls of stamps could be considered a good performance.

The Swiss-made bill changer has had little trouble, but the British-made coin changer has been getting stuck regularly. When it does, the screen flashes a message saying: "You cannot use coins."

But that also means you cannot use large bills, because the PMCs are programmed to give only about \$3 in change.

Meanwhile, in Washington, D.C., Myron G. Hill tried for several weeks before Christmas to find out whether the PMCs there had been reprogrammed to accept no orders for stamps below 19¢. He couldn't. The machines were out of order. In the new year, the machines still sold 1¢ stamps.

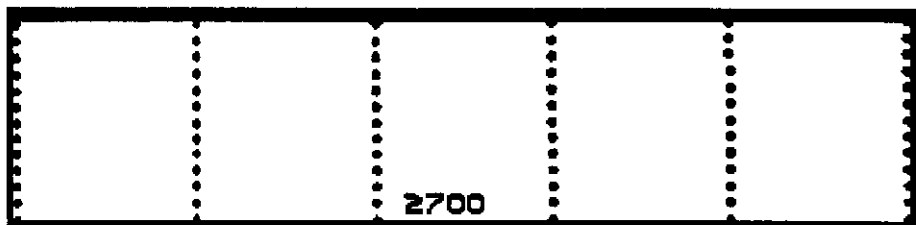
Finally, the Washington-area machines were reprogrammed on Jan. 29-30, according to Charles Yeager, writing in *Linn's*, who said BEP has reprinted the stamps. □

Back Numbered Testing Coils



These non-denominated test stamps are The First and only contemporary test stamps with Back Numbers. They are perforated, printed in black ink on white gummed paper by Stamp Venturers. The back numbers are printed in violet on every 10th stamp. These were produced by Stamp Venturers to show their quality printing and packaging capabilities. We were the successful bidder for the roll of 3,000 stamps, the proceeds of which went to the American Red Cross for the Hurricane Disaster Relief Fund.

We are offering back numbered strips of 5 for sale at —
\$45.00 per strip



Longer strips available upon request.

There are less than 300 strips available so *order yours today* to avoid disappointment.

NY residents please add applicable tax. On orders under \$100,
 please add \$1.50 for postage and handling

MICHAEL M. KAREN

1025 Rosedale Road, Box 517, N. Woodmere, NY 11582

Collectors vs. Dealers

Continued from Page 27

just a week had passed. More than just a few weeks had passed. It was a full two months later.

Was the price up to \$150? No.

Or, even \$100? No.

It was priced at \$85. So much for the hype.

But they were not done. This time they urged: "If you have yet to purchase the 10¢ Eagle and Shield A33334, hurry! Price will soon rise to \$150."

None of the hype was softened with a "if no further supplies are found."

The case of 'F' 1211

This is the same dealer who sent out a September 1991 list that began, "As you can see by the lists, the 'F' Flower 1211 has gone to \$20 and will be at \$100 in the near future." No ifs, and, or buts. The price was, indeed, at around \$20 then, but it has never been near \$100.

More of the 1211s were found in Michigan and it is now between \$28 and \$40.

I do not know exactly when the Michigan find was made, but *TPN* reported in September that they were "noticed a few months back." So it seems safe to say that the Michigan find had not reached the market as early as March. So what was the price in March? Around \$35.

That's a full year after it came out and six months after Stamps 'n' Stuff had said it "will be at \$100 in the near future" and it was at \$35.

In the September 1991 Stamps 'n' Stuff mailing, Jerry Koepf stated: "I feel less than 2,000 strips survived" and Ed Denson repeated that figure in the January 1992 *Coil Line*.

It has been less than a full year since E&S A32333 was found, and its price has gone above \$180. The size of the A32333 find has been put at 1,875 strips, with a few more found since. This leads to the inescapable conclusion that there were significantly more than "2,000 strips" of "F" 1211 in the original find or that A32333 is way overpriced, or both.

The WCSE finds

The bargain-basement 18¢ Flag Plate 6 buy

Then there's the World Columbian Stamp Exposition story.

The buyer of the rolls of the 18¢ Flag from Plate 6 has never been identified in print, and may not have been a regular PNC dealer.

The buyer of the 20¢ Consumer Education and 20¢ Flag rolls was also not published, but *TPN* reported that they had been offered to Koepf and I have to assume that he did buy them at the reported 80% of face.

If I am wrong, *TPN* should set the record straight as I am sure others reached the same conclusion.

Collectors are divided over whether the deal was proper. (I feel that a full normal buy price should not be automatic, but that face or less than face was an insult.) But clearly many collectors were offended (for examples, see *Coil Line*, August 1992, Pages 114-115).

Dealers buy at XF; sell at F-VF

Speaking of buying, it needs to be pointed out that in Koepf's published buy ads, the fine print at the bottom says the prices are for XF. (*Linn's*, Oct. 26, Page 22, and most recently, *Coil Line*, January 1993, Page 7) and that F-VF is less. But when he prints

sell ads, this fine print says prices are for F-VF and that XF is more. While such fine-print games may be common in the insurance business, they are not welcome in PNCs.

Collector makes find; dealer reaps rewards

Getting back to WCSE, it was Koepf who cleaned out the vending machine of the 29¢ Rushmores from Plate 6 printed on Lenz paper. I do not know whether William Castle [who made the find and provided instructions on how to get to that post office at the meeting of PNC³ at WCSE] is simply very generous or whether he did not know the value of the variety, but I doubt that his intent was for them to end up going to a dealer.

Pressure about A33334

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz opened his pricing on the E&S A33334 at \$70, along with a notice that the price would go up 20% in mid-October.

Pressure!

It did go up to \$84, and now he has a note that the "price will rise shortly."

More pressure.

Yet he refuses to disclose the size of the find. How can he expect us to fork over \$84 or more when we do not know how many are out there? Plus there's the possibility that more may turn up. It happened with the "F" 1211 and there have been at least two small additional finds of the E&S A32333 (*Coil Line*, November 92, Page 169; *TPN*, November 1992, Page 127).

All of this may explain what is causing frustration to some collectors. Now let's turn to the future.

USPS knuckles under

Setting aside coils for the PSD

TPN (November 1992, Page 119) reported that, starting with E&S A77777, the American Bank Note Co. will put aside a quantity of each number for sale through the Philatelic Sales Division.

Will it only be for ABN or for all printers? How many will be set aside?

[*TPN* note: All printers now receive a specific request from the Postal Service as to the number of stamps to be set aside at each plate change. The quantity to be set aside varies with each order for stamps. If an entire press run is completed without a plate change, the requirement is waived. It is still unclear whether this requirement would be in effect for a printing order such as the 4¢ Stagecoach with overall tagging, all of which were intended for the Disabled American Veterans, and where no plate change took place. The stamps set aside for the PSD are there only to make sure that each number gets into collector hands, but it remains a lottery. You cannot order PNCs by plate number from the PSD. This information came from USPS after Mr. Jams wrote this, and *TPN* regrets that it gave the impression that it would become possible to order PNCs by number from the PSD.]

If the number of stamps put aside is small, will a limit be placed on orders to prevent someone from buying up the whole PSD supply?

Collectors who are satisfied with F-VF centering will be able to fill their needs through the PSD. Where's the challenge in that?

Dealers will no longer be able to sell F-VF new issues. Will they start charging more for XF?

Another collector wrote me: "If the Philatelic Sales Division gets a copy of every number and sells strips by number, I think it might drive dealers out of business."

Numbers on boxes

On the same page, *TPN* says: "In another move to improve relations with collectors, the Postal Service has requested that ABN place on the carton the plate-number combination of the stamps. Stamp Venturers has received the same request."

Is it really being done for collectors, or for dealers?

TPN, March 1992, Page 28: "Put numbers on box, Haake asks."

TPN, July 1992, Page 70: "He (Dr. Rabinowitz) had also asked that USPS ask printers to place labels on boxes to identify the numbers inside."

Numbers on boxes could be a mixed blessing. It would make searching easier for collectors and reduce dealers' search costs, which could be passed on to collectors, but it also means that dealers could more easily determine what is scarcer and then snatch up the entire supply, as they have with the E&S A32333 and A33334.

Putting numbers on the boxes and selling through the PSD appear to be in response to the problems created by the flood of E&S numbers that came out almost at the same time. These seem to be questionable solutions. Why upset a system that has produced a very popular collecting area? Why not go after the problem directly by controlling the flood of new plate numbers?

Dealer arrangements with postal clerks

At least two out-of-state dealers (Dr. Rabinowitz and Jerry Koepf) have contacted the San Jose philatelic window looking for scarce numbers. I resent the fact that out-of-state dealers are trying to raid my philatelic window. Fortunately, the clerk here does not honor such requests, but obviously some postal workers go out of their way for such requests—Dr. Rabinowitz was notified the same day that the E&S A33334 rolled (no pun intend-

ed) in.

I would be amazed if Ken Lawrence does not have something to say about this—back in the April 27, 1992, issue of *Linn's*, he wrote:

Some dealers have private arrangements with philatelic clerks, window clerks, and even overseas USPS agents to obtain PNC strips and plate blocks at face value without the need to purchase the scrap.

He also wrote:

This [heavy over-ordering of certain stamps, especially coils, in the hopes of securing new (possibly "scarce") plate numbers] is already practiced by certain philatelic clerks who have arrangements with certain PNC dealers.

Lawrence did not name names.

Earlier, Ed Gould wrote in *TPN* about some accountable paper custodians and philatelic clerks who "are in cahoots with some PNC dealers and give those dealers favored treatment, including guarding of desirable material by storing them in private caches in the post office and by falsifying their inventories."

That was back in May of 1990, but this kind of garbage is still going on today.

[*Editor's note:* The following point was added by Mr. Iams after his original comments were mailed out to our panel for responses. They did not see this and could not comment on it.]

I just heard from another collector who wishes to be known only as a member of "the Ohio Gang," who wrote:

The dealer, who supplies the Big 3 and other PNC dealers from the Akron philatelic window, is a quaint old bugger by the name of Bob Freed whose stamp store is called the Stamp Merchant.

Many a time I would see Mr. Freed at the end of the philatelic counter stripping away thousands of dollars of PNC strips for shipment. He has the "in" with the clerk.

If I ask for a roll, the answer is, "We don't have any more rolls" or "I'm going on my lunch break" (at 3:30 p.m.?) or the classic, "I have an audit tomorrow."

... and comments from dealers as well as collectors

Continued from Page 27

the wholesale price of this strip—but trusting the given information we bought 475 strips, a major outlay of working capital. That's more financial risk than any collector was exposed to. We would have been more cautious if we felt more strips existed. The price has not risen to what we anticipated, but no others have been found and the price has not gone below its original price.

Most collectors are aware that price fluctuations occur in any collectible market. Most investors realize that there is an element of risk in every investment. Yet when it comes to stamps, they don't want to apply the same logic. Buy at a price you are comfortable with—some will go up; some will go down, but overall you will do well.

WCSE

Large shows are extremely hectic, and buying in these events can prove troublesome. During WCSE a doctor approached us to see if we bought excess postage. He said he had been around the room and no one seemed very interested in buying. We told him we would look at what he had for sale. He opened his briefcase to reveal a stack of sheets and No. 10 envelopes containing coils. Each envelope was sealed with the number of rolls and the denomination written on the outside. He refused to let us examine the con-

tents, saying he wanted 80% of face. We noticed that one of the envelopes was marked "15¢," so we asked if he had any 18¢ rolls. He replied that he had sold most of those earlier in the day.

We told him that these could contain some better numbers.

He went back to the first individual, but they had already been resold.

We decided to gamble on the contents of the briefcase and paid in five figures for it, based on his computations—quite a sum considering that it had been on the show floor all day being offered to others.

That evening, we opened the envelopes. We found one roll of Consumer Education 3 and 4 and two rolls of the 20¢ Flag 4. But there could just as easily have been nothing worth more than face in the lot.

How many of you would have bought a lot without knowing what it contained?

In this case, our gamble paid off; many times it does not.

The next day, we purchased several 18¢ Flag 6 from another dealer. What he paid, what he charged us, and the profit he made was his business. We paid what we were willing to pay.

The balance of the doctor's lot was subsequently sold at a discount to other dealers. We spoke to the doctor a few weeks later and told him what had happened with the Flags. He wasn't upset; he was just glad to get rid of what for him had been a headache.

Lenz paper

We were not at the PNC₃ meeting that disclosed the location of the Lenz paper. A collector told us about it later. Two weeks after the show (ample time for all those at the meeting and everyone they could tell to wander down and buy theirs) we flew to Chicago and spent four hours purchasing the strips. The machine was not empty when we left. Collectors from the Chicago area continued to buy them until weeks later.

Ads

This is pure bunk. Both buy and sales ads are typeset by the publications. There is no small print.

If you want to see small print, look at the offerings of gold stamps or the Man on Mars issue.

Yes, some of our ads specify XF when we buy. It would surprise you what people send in if we don't.

But we also run bimonthly ads for VF. Our sales ads are for VF because most of the collectors request them this way. Also, most other dealers' lists are for VF and we want to make comparison shopping easy.

Fewer dealers

Retail stamp dealers are becoming an endangered species. Astronomical rents, insurance, theft, mail fraud, credit card fees, post-

age, telephones, advertising, multiple sales taxes, income taxes, etc. force most to revert to some other, more lucrative and less time-consuming profession. This does not help the collector. Less competition means higher prices.

Instead of picking up the phone and dialing an 800 number to order a few items, you could spend hours on the phone finding which post offices have which numbers, getting money orders to pay for rolls, finding someone to buy all the excess postage, and so on. In the long run, you would be spending more per strip than any dealer charges you.

Perhaps Mr. Iams should attempt to run a mail-order or retail stamp business for a year or two.

After he turns his hobby into a business, he will understand why profit is not a dirty word. And if he can be successful providing those hype-free, 100% accurate ads while providing bargain-basement prices and still paying for his time, while paying top dollar for everything he buys, we will gladly take his advice on how to run our business.

D. John Shultz responds

D. John, who lives in Kansas, is a collector who has also been a dealer. He is a member of the PNC Study Group.

As someone who has seen both sides, as a former part-time dealer and as an avid collector, I would like to provide a reply to Doug Iams. I will attempt to comment in the same sequence as Mr. Iams.

• Regarding "dealers' hype of higher prices ahead." On any still-current issue, it is at best a crystal-ball call whether more copies of a new number may be found. A dealer who wants to promote his good find might do best to state honestly something like "Found in small quantities in only two post offices after extensive countrywide search." At least this would indicate that the number to date has, indeed, been hard to find. I don't believe it is necessary to point out that the price will go up if no more are found. That should be simple economics that any educated adult should understand.

The buyer has the option of waiting and hoping more are found to bring the price down or to buy at today's higher price and know that the item is in his collection. No one has a gun at his head forcing him to wait or buy.

In the case of Eagle and Shield A33334, the price did not escalate as predicted (although it has held steady).

In the case of the "F" 1211, assuming Mr. Iams' quote of Jerry Koepf's list is correct, Jerry might have done well to state speculatively "... has gone to \$20 and could be at \$100 in the near future" rather than stating positively "... has gone to \$20 and will be at \$100 in the near future." We may never know whether Jerry meant to say "could" or "will," but since no one has control over what else may be found somewhere in the back of an accountable-paper vault, and Jerry knows this, I'd guess Jerry meant to say "could."

• Regarding the WCSE finds. I don't feel too sorry for the seller of the coils. He had the option of checking around to see if (1) he could get over 80% of face, or (2) whether

any of the coils he had were better material. Simply put, it would appear that his haste to sell the coils prompted him to accept the first offer. Too bad for him!

• As to "ads offering to buy at XF" with fine print saying "less for F-VF." What's wrong with that? Some items, particularly certain old Cottrell-printed coils, were hard to find with premium centering and should command a premium price whether buying or selling. As long as "F-VF is less" is pointed out, albeit in smaller print, then I see nothing wrong.

One side note: On issues on which centering was consistently fairly good, I believe it is wrong to charge large premiums for XF. When I dealt in coils, I could not bring myself to charge a pre-set percentage premium across the board for XF or Superb. I believe the premium has to be specific to a plate number to be fair to both buyer and seller.

• I will withhold comment on Rushmore 6's on Lenz paper since I do not know the history of this issue. I will say that anyone is free to obtain whatever stamps from whichever post office has them, whether collector or dealer. First come, first served!

• Regarding Bob Rabinowitz's "pressure about A33334." I would hesitate to call this pressure and would rather call it "hopeful salesmanship" on Dr. Bob's part. As stated earlier, no one can control what additional finds may be made and nobody forces a collector to buy today, tomorrow, or anytime. If one doesn't like the prevailing price of an issue, any dealer could challenge him to get on the phone, start writing inquiry letters, or get in the car and start driving to post offices to try to find more. Finding sources of new numbers can sometimes be easy, but it can also be extremely costly in time and expenses. It can lead to "dry wells" as well as to "gushers." Dealers are willing to assume these risks and costs, amortizing them over the volume of their business; but few collectors will assume these risks and costs just to find an example for a collection. In part, you pay for this "locator service" when you buy from a dealer.

• Regarding "USPS knuckles under." As I just stated, anyone, collector or dealer, can buy from Philatelic Sales, if they are willing to buy more than the minimum quantity required. First come, first served!

If the minimum-purchase requirement at PSD is too much for an individual collector, what is to keep him from going in partners with fellow collectors to split up the purchase?

As one of the few who have searched from American Samoa to Guam to Alaska and to the Virgin Islands for issues, I welcome the simplification of set-aside, identified boxes of plate numbers on coils because it should mean reduced total cost for an item whether it is bought directly from the PSD by the collector or from a dealer who has had his per-unit acquisition costs reduced as well.

On what does Mr. Iams base his statement that putting plate numbers on boxes "means that dealers would more easily determine what is scarcer and then snatch up the entire supply"? Dealers don't have an exclusive information line to the Postal Service: anyone who wishes to go to the trouble can call USPS employees and obtain information. I doubt if

any dealers are paying USPS employees not to share information.

In the same vein, what is wrong with out-of-town dealers contacting philatelic windows in Mr. Iams' neighborhood? Surely, Mr. Iams doesn't want to suggest that he should get favored, protected treatment in his own backyard! I have scoured Bob Rabinowitz's neighborhood for good finds, just as he has canvassed mine. I don't own exclusive rights to this or any other territory. Again, first come, first served! Further, I am not surprised to find that many distant clerks do accommodate Dr. Rabinowitz and any other dealers and collectors by selling to them because such sales aid their personal and their offices' sales volume tremendously.

I can understand some of Mr. Iams' frustration, but this is a free and open society based on the principles of capitalism and supply and demand. Anyone who wants to make the effort, risk, and expense has a relatively like chance to locate—and, yes, even buy up—a scarce number. He is at risk of another find popping up tomorrow.

To me, the fun of collecting is partly in the challenge of the hunt. Another part is the fun of speculating about what will be good and what won't. Still another part of the fun is my deciding what I collect: if I become bored, unhappy, or disenchanting, I can always switch to another area of interest.

Lastly, regardless of how I feel about an issue, I know that there are open forums for me to speak my mind, and for that I am thankful.

Ken Lawrence responds:

Ken is an associate editor of this magazine and a widely published philatelic journalist. He is a governor of the Bureau Issues Association and a director-at-large of the American Philatelic Society, currently running for secretary of that organization. He lives in Mississippi.

There will always be PNC collectors, but actions by the Postal Service and by stamp dealers can profoundly affect the overall popularity of the specialty. The grumbling I hear from lots of collectors is not heartening in that regard; Doug Iams has written down his concerns, but many others have expressed similar opinions to me as I've traveled around the country.

There's one added negative dimension that Mr. Iams didn't mention: hypocrisy. Bob Rabinowitz charged Ed Gould with hypocrisy, claiming that Gould has searched post offices for scarce PNCs with the same zeal and greed as anyone. Dr. Rabinowitz charged his fellow dealers with price gouging on the variable-rate coils while he was doing the same thing with E&S A33334.

I am opposed to the numbers on boxes, although that will certainly make searching a lot easier. For me, the whole point of PNC collecting is the hunt. If a plate number is now just another feature that anyone can buy at will from the Postal Service, the challenge will disappear.

Dr. Robert Rabinowitz responds:

Dr. Rabinowitz is a PNC dealer and a

member of the PNC Study Group. He lives in Connecticut.

Mr. Iams' complaints about Jerry Koopp, and what he perceives to be "hype" are best handled by Koopp. In my own dealings, I try to avoid the "hype" and stick to the facts. Perhaps that reflects my training as a scientist.

Yes, there were more A33334s found than A32333s. Al Haake and I chose not to provide exact quantities. We told anyone who asked that the quantity was more than the 15 rolls of 3,000 of A32333 (1,875 strips) and less than half a case (less than 32 rolls, therefore less than 4,000 strips). Based on both the retail and wholesale responses to the initial pricing, we priced it right.

Mr. Iams calls it "pressure" that I announced that the \$70 price of A33334 was going up 20% on a specific date (and it did). I look at it as marketing that provided customers with an opportunity to take advantage of a lower introductory price. Many did; some waited, hoping that more would be found and that the price would drop.

Mr. Iams apparently doesn't understand the PNC market. He questions whether placing numbers on cartons is for collectors or dealers. I campaigned for carton number identification because it makes my job simpler. And what's simpler for me translates to less costly for customers. Al Haake and I earned a great deal of money from A33334; that's no secret. And the few A32333s I have left provide additional high profits.

You can be sure that if the order to label the cases had been in place before Eagle and Shield, those profits just wouldn't have been there and collectors would have those numbers available right now for a few dollars each.

The fact is that dealers make more profit on scarce and rare numbers than they do on common ones. So why would I campaign for labeled cartons? A classic paranoid might believe that this might give me and anyone who "conspires" with me the opportunity to "buy them all" and control the market. But what is "all"? On E&S A32333, the 15,239 impression total corresponds to close to 7 million stamps. To corner the market you'd have to get almost all of them. Who would expect a consortium of PNC dealers to come up with \$700,000 for this job? Give me a break.

Despite the fact that my profits swell when scarce or rare numbers appear, my primary concern is the health of PNC philately. I went through the era when thousands of collectors of complete matched sets of plate blocks "bailed out" as a result of the USPS making the finding of all the numbers difficult on a regular basis. It became too much trouble and too costly for collectors and dealers to continue.

Most dealers are very happy supplying the current material, developing customers, and having these customers purchase the older PNCs when it suits them.

Will all plate numbers being available at the Philatelic Sales Division destroy PNC collecting? I seriously doubt that. I'm counting on the likelihood that should that occur, most of my customers will continue to purchase from me because of the service they receive. By analogy, there are literally hundreds of

dealers in U.S. stamps out there who spend sizable sums advertising and assembling multicolored catalogs offering mint singles, blocks, plate blocks, and sheets—all of which are completely available from the PSD. These dealers prosper despite the PSD's availability and, by analogy, the same would hold true in the PNC area.

Mr. Iams' concern about dealers conspiring to gain total control of a particular number is unfounded, particularly if the PSD manages the supply so that enough is brought in to preclude even the thought of any type of manipulation. Here, too, the dealers support PSD availability because it is felt that this would be in the best interest of PNC philately.

Mr. Iams is concerned about numbers being broadly available from the PSD because it would upset the system. What system is Mr. Iams concerned about? Is it the current one, which through supply and demand brought about certain prices to which he objects? Which side of the fence is Mr. Iams sitting on, or is he just straddling it?

And, yes, I'd like to ask Mr. Iams what he would do if his friendly clerk in San Jose turned up the only two boxes of eight rolls of 3,000 of the unbound A12113 which, for an investment of \$2,400, would provide 2,000 PS/Ss with an estimated retail value of more than \$250,000?

Ed Denson responds:

Ed is a PNC dealer and a member of the PNC Study Group. He lives in California.

Thanks for letting me comment on Doug Iams' rather interesting letter. First, let me challenge TPN's premise in running it.

You feel there is a "decline in PNC enthusiasm on the part of collectors." I don't see any decline in enthusiasm among collectors. In fact, my experience is quite the opposite. I just ran my most successful mail sale ever. Some 82 collectors bid more than \$20,000 for PNCs, and I sold 90% of the lots. At the same time PNC³ ran a successful sale with more than \$7,000 in winning bids.

PNC collectors have a growing organization in PNC³, two publications devoted to the field, and columns in virtually every general stamp magazine.

There is a PNC Catalog, and it has found a new home.

I'm tracking 13 full-line dealers in my market report and there are several more whom I should add. My annual price index for 1992 shows PNC prices up 16% during 1992 and the market appears to be booming.

I don't mean to say there are no problems in paradise, but if you compare PNCs with almost any other philatelic field—or with just about any other collectables—it appears that things are working well. From that perspective I'd like to address some of the complaints and possible problems that Mr. Iams brings up.

And, by the way, thanks to Mr. Iams and TPN, for getting all of the complaints out and dealing with them.

Price predictions

Mr. Iams doesn't like dealers predicting future price increases on items they want to sell. He points out, correctly, that the 29¢ "F"

1211, while going up, has not come close to the \$150 originally predicted. He also points out that the E&S A33334 has gone up exactly as predicted by Dr. Rabinowitz, who has a corner on it.

What I don't understand is why it is bad that 29U1211 did not meet prediction but also bad that 10U(A33334)P did. It seems to me that we either want the dealer predictions to be accurate or we don't.

I'm leery of price predictions myself because they can make you look silly if they don't come true. But I've also just finished one year of a market study and there are PNCs that went up more than 400%, like 4T1Ri (the overall-tagged 4¢ Stagecoach from the B Press) or even 500% like 25Fii (the phosphored Plate 1 of the Yosemite). This kind of price increase happens every year to one PNC or another, so I understand why a dealer getting a scarce stamp would get carried away with its future potential. While I question the wisdom of it, I don't see anything sinister or alarming in it.

Prices and the market

Mr. Iams feels that the relative prices of 29U1211 and 10U(A32333)P are not in line with each other. He also feels that 10U(A33334)P is overpriced. All these things are possible. So what? The world is filled with items that are under- or overpriced. Ever buy a new car?

As collectors, if we feel that a strip is overpriced (by that I mean that it will be available, later, at a lower price), why not wait for the price to fall before buying the strip? There are 398 PNCs out there and I'm sure most of us don't have them all, so there's plenty to do while we await the shift in the market.

I suspect that the real problem behind these pricing complaints is that Mr. Iams is uncertain about supply, demand, and prices. On the one hand—if he's wrong and doesn't buy and the strips go up—he's out of luck. On the other hand—if he buys and prices go down—he could have made a better deal. This creates a psychological tension that can be no fun. But each of these propositions has an opposite: if he doesn't buy and prices go down, he was shrewd; if he does buy and prices go up, he's making money. I see as much of a chance for joy as for gloom here.

Maybe the system ain't broke

USPS has a proposal that will take the uncertainty out of the system for all of us. It will get a supply of every number and offer it through the Philatelic Sales Division. This is a logical outcome if collectors complain about distribution of PNCs. Mr. Iams doesn't like this outcome. I don't either.

Collecting of U.S. stamps in general is in decline. It is also very boring. There are a zillion stamps a year, none of them valuable, none of them interesting, none of them hard to find.

The only challenge is getting \$30 together to buy a year set. It even comes with an album, complete with a write-up and a display "better than anything you might do." It is trouble-free collecting. It is also no fun.

PNCs have been the exception to the general U.S. decline. They have attracted collec-

tors, the market has boomed, and research is rampant. Why is this? I say it is because of the chaos and unpredictability of PNCs. We don't know what numbers will be issued, or how many printed, or where they will turn up. This makes the field interesting. It creates opportunity for dealers to make finds, do research, make money. The surest way to kill it off is for collectors and dealers to start demanding that USPS take all the challenge out of it. It will become like dune-country collecting without the pretty pictures: No annoying postal use of the stamps to disrupt the supply, all items available in whatever quantity you like for as long as you like at a fixed price. I don't know about you, but I prefer the PNC situation the way it was.

Please Mr. Government, don't fix this for us. End racism instead, and we'll take care of the stamp market ourselves.

The role of dealers

Mr. Iams has several complaints about dealers. The stories about buying valuable PNC rolls for under face from innocent collectors are disturbing. Perhaps *TPN* can set out the known facts about this. I think dealers need to tell collectors and their heirs the true value of their stamps, and I would be very disturbed if this does not happen.

I do know dealers who make mistakes, too. I own a used strip of five of Plate 3 of the 18¢ Flag that a dealer bought as part of an under-face lot and then used as postage to mail some stamps to a customer. He made nine cents on the transaction. The original collector lost nine cents, the person who got the package made \$400. Who really deserved the money?

We live under capitalism

Turning to hype and market corners, it's true that these exist in PNCs, although not to the extent that they do in other fields. Dr. Rabinowitz, among others, attempts with some success to manipulate the market. I have no quarrel with that. I don't mind in the least that he goes to great lengths, spending lots of time and effort to find PNCs. I don't mind that he spends his money to buy what he finds, and that he corners the market when he can, just as he has on the E&S A33334. I think that's fine. It benefits us all, and if he makes money at it, more power to him. My only disagreement with the good doctor is that he doesn't report the number of strips found. Since I see philately as a branch of science, I believe in sharing knowledge, and I find it unfortunate that not everyone agrees.

I don't see any problem with dealers buying up scarce stamps when they learn they are at a post office. In fact, I believe it is the only way that any numbers of these items will ever reach the philatelic world. Collectors are more apt to get a few for themselves and then let the rest go. I say three cheers for William Castle for reporting the Lenz paper find, and three more cheers for Jerry Koepf for securing the stamps for the philatelic world. The problem is not dealer hoarding; it is collectors not reporting finds until it is too late for dealers to get them for the rest of us. The proper headline for that paragraph in Mr. Iams' letter is not "Collector makes find; but dealer reaps rewards." It should be: "Collector makes find; dealer follows through; we

all benefit."

It follows then that I don't feel that the stamps sent to the San Jose philatelic window are meant exclusively for Mr. Iams or other nearby collectors. The job of the philatelic clerk is to sell stamps, and if he refuses "out-of-state" dealers he should be reprimanded. Favoritism is favoritism. If we criticize it in one case, we must do so in all.

Just because it's a cliché

doesn't mean it's good advice

Everyone wants to cut down on uncertainty. Dealers want labels on PNC boxes, collectors want every number at the philatelic window, or for dealers to guarantee price increases. But the uncertainty is what makes PNCs fun, and valuable. My advice: Be happy, don't worry. Accept Dr. Rabinowitz, the Postal Service, Stamps 'n' Stuff, and the American Bank Note Co. as a part of life. Don't try to change them, and don't get mad at them for being who and what they are.

Remember the story of the goose that laid the golden egg, don't fix what ain't broke, and enjoy yourself. It's later than you think.

Ed Gould responds:

Ed is a Michigan collector.

I find no fault with stamp dealers who maximize their profit margin. They're businessmen who provide a service by finding PNC items and then selling them at a profit. They'd be foolish not to make as much money as possible.

As long as the Postal Service ignores PNC collectors and their needs, these problems will continue. The low minimum printing requirement and the unequal geographic distribution will continue to make some plate numbers hard to find.

The simplest way to eliminate this difficulty is to mark the plate number on each case and to distribute 10% of each plate to the Philatelic Sales Division in Kansas City. The PSD could then place a maximum purchase of four plate strips per order, just as it does with the variable-rate coil.

If we were to petition the USPS through *TPN*, *Coil Line*, and *Linn's* and then send the petition to the postmaster general, I think we'd get results. I've talked with philatelic clerks all over the United States and most have no idea how hard it is to keep up with issues such as the Eagle and Shield.

Granted, stamp dealers who try to monopolize plate numbers would be at a disadvantage if my plan were put into force, but they would no longer incur the high overhead and there would still be the occasional plate, paper, or color variety that pops up from time to time that would not be available to most PNC collectors.

Tom Maeder responds:

Tom is president of the Plate Number Coil Collector's Club (PNC³) and a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group.

Steve asked me to react to Doug Iams' letter. My comments are made not as PNC³ president, but as an individual.

Doug's complaints are not his alone. They

have appeared in *TPN* and *Coil Line* from other letter writers. I don't know if discontent has been festering for a long time, but the Eagle and Shield situation has certainly caused it to surface.

Americans have long felt screwed by insurance companies, oil companies, banks, and even their government. We often feel buffeted and powerless, and have grown very cynical. Philately is a refuge, and we expect it to have a certain purity. Now with the Eagle and Shields we hear words like "manipulated" and "rigged." Ken Lawrence refers to the supply as "tightly held." It's the same thing. Now, for some, PNCs are starting to remind us of everything we hate.

My opinion is that the retail price for A32333 and A33334 is generally realistic. Dr. Rabinowitz and Al Haake say there are 15 rolls of A32333, and between 16 and 31 rolls of A33334 (vaguely specific). One problem with this situation is that a syndicate holds the supply. If five or six different people had found the supply in different locations, the price could float by competition to a genuine supply-demand level. Under those circumstances, the price would probably be lower. As it is, other dealers buy from the syndicate and add their normal markup. Leaving aside words like "manipulated," "rigged," or "fixed," the price is in fact centrally set. So, evils are potentially present as they are in any monopolistic situation.

When Jerry Koepf uses words like "price will rise next week," it may reflect a knowledge that the price at his source will rise next week. Nevertheless, to see the words in print is unquestionably obnoxious. The price didn't rise because the supply shrank appreciably (there are still plenty of both numbers left, even now). The price rose because of central control.

Dealers have benefitted collectors by finding numbers before they were all consumed by commercial users. So many E&S numbers appeared so fast, we would have never found them all on our own.

But clearly this E&S situation was the direct impetus for the USPS decision to sell coils by plate number from Philatelic Sales. I applaud the decision. It won't drive dealers out of business. A dealer should be more than a new-issues service. Let him spend some energy contacting kiloware sorters so there is a good supply of used singles. Like every other aspect of American commerce, those who adapt will continue to do well.

Alan Thomson responds:

Alan is a member of the Plate Number Coil Study Group. He lives in New Hampshire.

Much of what Doug Iams complains about appears to deal with methods of advertising. I cannot share his objection to the Madison Avenue hype that some sellers employ. If we in the buying public, no matter what the field of merchandise, cannot fight our way through advertising baloney, we are in for a tough ride in this day and age. In our market system the seller can describe his wares in the glowiest terms, provided he does not resort to outright lies. There's nothing wrong with this in my view. It's annoying, but not wrong.

One should look at the underlying frame of

mind in Mr. Iams' letter, rather than his specific objections. The letter conveys a dissatisfaction with the PNC marketplace that is growing deeper and more widespread among collectors. An ever growing majority is privately expressing disgust with what has happened in the past year.

Perhaps no two collectors will agree on each and every objection he has raised. Some feel entitled to be told of quantities found, some resent package deals where one must buy unwanted material to obtain a tough

strip, other are angered at buy prices that are 12% to 20% of a dealer's sell prices. All are legal devices, but they are not smart marketing in the long run, despite how clever the user thinks they are. They will ultimately undermine the very market the dealer is trying to maintain.

Addressing specific ills is not the answer. The real point is that if the collector perceives, for whatever reason, that he is not being dealt with fairly and openly, his only legitimate action is not to deal with the

offender. No matter what it is you don't like, the mere fact that you don't like it is reason to neither buy nor sell. The message will soon be conveyed.

Collectors are driven to complete a collection. Some seem to believe that if it's not complete, none of it is any good. This is nonsense. Enjoy what you can obtain and still have a smile on your face when you buy. If there's anger, *don't deal*. It's your most effective recourse. In fact, it's your only one. Use it! □

Unannounced Jefferson due in Great Americans Series

A complete surprise arrived in the mail on Feb. 3, the announcement that Thomas Jefferson would be on a 29¢ Great Americans stamp to be issued April 13, his 250th birthday.

The stamp had not been listed in the announcement of stamps due to be issued in 1993, but was not politically influenced by the Clinton Administration.

It was a surprise in other respects as well:

- Slowly stamps in the Great Americans Series have been replaced in the past few years with stamps showing wildlife. The Postal Service has steadfastly denied that a Wildlife Series exists.

- Another stamp had been announced as the next subject in the Great Americans Series showing Mary Breckenridge. After the Breckenridge family objected to the model, the art was redone. A spokesman for the Citizens Stamp Advisory Commission told *TPN* a few years ago that the stamp was still on the program and would be issued whenever a new value was needed in the series. When the time for that stamp came, it showed Chester Carlson instead. Meanwhile, other Great Americans have been added to the series, including the 29¢ Earl Warren, which was issued March 9, 1992.

The Jefferson stamp will probably replace the Warren stamp.

While the spokesperson for Stamp Venturers, which had not begun printing when *TPN* went to press, could not recall the date the printing order was issued by the Postal Service, she said it "was very recently." Asked if it was this year, she said, "Oh, yes, it was definitely this year."

Joe Brockert of USPS gave this account: Another World Stamp Expo had been proposed for 1993 and a Jefferson stamp had been approved in 1992 by the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee to honor Expo as well as Jefferson on his 250th birthday. But budgetary constraints canceled Expo and the stamp was switched in format to the Great Americans instead.

The Great Americans Series seemed to be on its way out when the \$2 William

Jennings Bryan was replaced by a \$2 Bobcat stamp. Other values that were replaced were the 1¢ Margaret Mitchell, which gave way to the 1¢ Kestrel; the 3¢ Paul Dudley White to the 3¢ Bluebird, the 19¢ Sequoyah to the 19¢ Fawn, the 30¢ Frank C. Laubach to the 30¢ Cardinal, and the 45¢ Harvey Cushing MD to the 45¢ Pumpkinseed Sunfish.

In addition, the 25¢ Honeybee appeared as a coil stamp.

If it looks like a series and appears to be a series, why is the Postal Service denying that it is a series?

Some evidence of the speed being used in production of the 29¢ Jefferson may be seen in the fact that the original color announced in the Jan. 29 news release was changed less than three days later.

The original color, stated as PMS 276, was changed to PMS 296. The original color was to be a dark purple-black. Instead, the stamp will be a dark blue-black.

No definitive stamps were announced in the stamp program for 1993 released on

Runyon nearly fired

In his last week in office, President Bush fired Postmaster General Marvin Runyon and all the governors of the Postal Service because of their refusal to institute a 27¢ postal rate for self-addressed, bar-coded return envelopes sent out with bills.

The Postal Rate Commission (PRC) had wanted the rate; USPS did not.

Runyon appealed to the courts, which held that the Postal Service was an independent agency and was within its rights in rejecting a PRC rate. It also held that the governors were not subject to removal by the President. □

Unisys UVM test to start

Testing of the Unisys Postal Mailing Centers is to start in Washington in March, *Linn's* reported.

The stamps, printed by American Bank Note, have the plate numbers at the bottom. □

Oct. 8, nor were any for Stamp Expo.

The Jefferson stamp is being printed by Stamp Venturers at its own plant in Ogdensburg, N.Y., on a T/A Press, which uses a six-pane configuration in which plate numbers appear on the four outside panes at their usual locations, while the two center panes have the plate numbers in the top or bottom selvage, making it necessary for collectors of matched plate blocks to obtain six positions.

Previous T/A stamps had two paired plates of 600, with different plate numbers.

Unlike the Warren stamp, the Jefferson will not have biographical data in the selvage.

The stamps are being printed on pre-phosphored paper. □

Postal inspectors aware of early 'G' stamp use

A nondenominated "G" stamp used on Jan. 14, 1993, was illustrated on the front page of *Linn's* for Feb. 8. The stamp was on a cover postmarked in Milwaukee.

Linn's said postal inspectors were aware of the illicit use, but did not say they were investigating.

According to the article by Michael Schreiber, no "G" stamps have been shipped to Philatelic Fulfillment (the new name of the Philatelic Sales Division) in Kansas City.

An earlier Milwaukee use, in December 1992, was also known by the inspectors, Schreiber reported.

The illustrated stamp, which shows a flag under the words "Old Glory," is rouletted vertically, leading to the suspicion that it was printed by Stamp Venturers, which made rouletted 29¢ Flowers.

Stamp Venturers confirmed to *TPN* that it is printing "G" stamp coils at its new plant in Ogdensburg, N.Y.

In plate-activity reports released by the Postal Service, no "G" stamps printed by Stamp Venturers have been reported, although American Bank Note has provided production figures for its version. □

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



SALE: The rarest "F" stamp!!!
29U1211 PS/5 VF \$28; XF \$35.

	PS	PS
1g Omnibus 1, 2, 5, 6	.55	.60
3, 4	1.20	1.35
B Press 1, 2	.80	.90
Untagged 2	.70	.75
2g Locomotive 3, 4, 8, 10	.80	.70
2, 6, 8 Press 1	.65	.95
.90	.90	
3g Handcar 1, 2, 3, 4	1.00	1.05
3g Conestoga Wagon 1, 2	1.50	1.65
3.4g School Bus 1, 2	7.50	8.00
PC 1, 2 (1R, No Gap)	2.25	2.35
4g Steam Locomotive 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	6.90	7.00
PC 3, 4 (1L, 2L)	10.40	10.50
PC 3, 4 (Line Gap)	7.75	8.25
PC 5, 6 (1L)	8.25	8.75
PC 5, 6 (2L)	10.40	10.50
PC 5, 6 (Line Gap)	1.50	1.75
Same, B Press 1	20.90	21.00
Overall tagged 1	2.00	2.25
4g Steam Carriage 1	1.75	2.00
Untagged	1.05	1.20
4.9g Backboard 3, 4	1.40	1.75
PC 1, 2 (1R, No Gap)	5.75	6.50
PC 3, 4 (2L, 1L)	—	15.75
PC 4 (No Gap)	—	15.75
PC 3, 4 (Line Gap)	5.75	6.50
PC 5, 6 (2R, PS/7)	—	6.00
PC 5, 6 (No Gap)	6.50	6.75
PC 5, 6 (1R)	—	7.50
PC 5, 6 (3L, PS/7)	—	7.00
PC 5, 6 (2L)	—	7.60
5g Motorcycle 1, 2, 3, 4	1.45	1.55
5g Milk Wagon 1	1.35	1.45
5g Circus Wagon 1	1.75	1.85
Same, untagged 1	1.75	1.85
Gravured, A1, A2	1.75	1.85
5g Canoe 1, 2	1.90	2.00
Gravured S11	1.65	1.75
5.2g Sleigh 1, 2	10.75	15.00
3	195.00	200.00
5	185.00	190.00
PC 1, 2 (No Gap)	12.00	12.75
PC 3, 5 (No Gap)	11.75	12.00
PC 4, 6 (2L)	—	16.00
PC 4, 6 (No Gap)	15.00	16.00
5.3g Elevator 1	1.50	1.65
5.5g Star Route Truck 1	2.75	3.00
PC 1	2.15	2.25
PC 2	4.25	4.50
5.9g Bicycle 3, 4	12.50	16.00
PC 3, 4 (No Gap)	28.00	32.00
PC 5, 6 (Line Gap)	90.00	95.00
6g Tricycle 1	1.65	1.80
PC 1	2.20	2.50
PC 2	9.50	10.00
7.1g Tractor 1	2.65	2.75
PC 1	3.50	3.75
PC 1 "ZIP+4"	2.50	2.75
7.4g Baby Buggy 2	10.00	12.25
PC 2	4.70	5.20
2255 7.6g Camera 1, 2	2.75	2.90
3	10.50	11.00
8.3g Ambulance 1, 2	2.00	2.25
PC 1, 2 (2L)	2.10	2.25
PC 1, 2 (1L, Line Gap)	2.25	2.80
PC 3, 4 (No Gap, PSB)	—	11.50
PC 3, 4 (1R)	5.00	5.50
B Press 1	4.15	4.50
2	4.60	5.00
8.4g Wheelchair 1, 2	2.75	3.00
3	26.00	26.50
8.5g Tow Truck 1	3.00	3.30
PC 1	3.60	4.00
PC 2	12.50	13.00

	PS	PS
9.3g Mail Wagon 1, 2	9.75	16.50
3, 4	32.50	45.00
5, 6	290.00	300.00
PC 1, 2 (2L, No Gap)	17.00	18.00
PC 3 (2R, No Gap)	51.00	66.00
PC 4 (1R)	—	46.00
PC 4 (2L)	—	30.00
PC 4 (Line Gap)	20.00	21.50
PC 5, 6 (2L, No Gap)	4.80	4.50
PC 8	275.00	280.00
10g Canal Boat 1	1.90	2.00
Prehosphored 1 F-VF	2.80	3.00
Same, XF	4.80	5.00
10g Tractor Trailer 1	2.35	2.55
(10g) Eagle, Shield		
11111, 11112, 21112, 22112, 22113, 43334, 43335, 53335, 77777, 88888		
	3.30	3.50
21113, 33335, 43325, 43326, 54444, 54445		
	4.80	5.00
33333, 43324, 43426, 34424, 34426		
	5.80	6.00
12213	25.00	25.00
32333 NO DISCOUNT	245.00	245.00
33334	115.00	115.00
10.1g Oil Wagon 1	2.75	3.15
PC 1, 2 (No Gap)	3.30	3.50
PC 2 (Ln Gap)	4.70	5.00
Red PC 2, 3	3.10	3.40
10.9g Hornum Cab 1, 2	20.00	45.00
PC 1, 2 (Line Gap)	30.00	32.00
PC 1, 2 (1R)	—	50.00
3, 4 (Line Gap)	350.00	—
11g Caboose 1	5.00	5.50
PC 1	4.00	4.50
Untagged PC 2	2.25	2.50
11g Stutz 1, 2, 3, 4	2.00	2.50
12g Steamer 1, 2	2.55	2.90
PC 1, 2 (No Gap, Line Gap)	2.70	3.00
B Press PC 1	25.00	25.00
12.5g Puffer 1	3.00	3.40
2	4.00	4.50
PC 1 Light olive, IIIa	3.50	4.00
PC 2 Dark olive, IIIa	3.75	4.25
PC 2	4.00	4.50
13g Patrol Wagon 1	3.20	3.50

	PS	PS
13.2g Coal Car 1, 2	3.00	3.25
14g Iceboat 1, 2, 3, 4	2.75	3.00
14g Iceboat B Press 2	4.00	4.30
15g Tugboat 1, 2 (Block)	3.25	3.65
Overall tagged 2	4.70	5.00
16.7g Popcorn 1, 2	4.40	4.75
17g Auto 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3.50	4.00
6	20.75	22.00
	5.50	6.00
11	9.00	9.50
PC 10, 20 (F only)	4.75	5.00
PC 3A, 4A (2L, 1L)	14.00	15.00
PC 3A, 4A (Line Gap/Low)	—	4.50
PC 3A, 4A (No Gap)	27.00	28.50
PC 3B, 4B (No Gap)	—	9.00
PC 3C, 4C (No Gap)	9.75	10.00
PC 3C, 4C (1R, Line Gap)	—	35.00
PC 3BA, 4BA (PS/10)	5.00	6.00
PC 5A (1L, 2L, No Gap)	15.50	17.75
PC 5B, 6B (1L, Line Gap)	—	17.00
PC 5AB, 7AB (PS/9) (5R)	—	15.00
PC 6A (1L, 2L)	12.00	13.00
PC 6C, 7C (No Gap)	25.00	25.50
PC 7A (No Gap)	—	12.50
17g Dog sled 2	3.20	3.60
17.5g Racer 1	3.15	3.50
PC 1	4.50	5.00
18g Sundry 1	100.00	110.00
2, 5, 6, 8, 17, 18	4.50	5.50
3, 4	75.00	78.00
7	44.75	50.00
9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16	14.00	16.00
13, 14	7.30	8.00
18g Flag 1	WANT	460.00
2	29.00	50.00
3	WANT	WANT
4	10.25	12.25
5	5.75	6.50
7	37.50	40.00
18g Wash, 1112, 3333	3.50	4.00
PC 11121	6.00	6.50
PC 33330	3.75	4.25
PC 33333 (dull gum, tagged)	6.75	7.25
PC 43444	9.50	9.25
19g Fishing Boat		
A1112	12.50	13.00
A1212	6.00	6.50

	PS	PS
A1111, 2424, 5555	3.25	3.50
20g Fire Pumper 1	80.00	200.00
3, 4, 13, 15, 16	5.50	6.00
5, 9, 10	4.50	5.00
7, 8 (PS/5 VF only)	100.00	180.00
12, 14	13.00	13.50
2	WANT	WANT
5	13.75	15.25
6	50.00	87.50
11	47.50	225.00
20g Consumer Ed. 1, 2	45.00	145.00
3, 4	9.50	90.00
20g Flag 1	6.00	13.00
2, 11	5.00	7.00
3, 12	—	65.00
4	65.00	WANT
6	90.00	160.00
5, 9, 10, 13, 14	5.00	6.00
8	5.00	16.00
PC 14	65.00	65.00
20g Official 1	22.50	25.00
20g Cable Car 1, 2 (block)	4.00	4.50
Overall tagged 2	6.00	7.00
20.5g Fire Engine 1	4.30	4.70
21g Rail Car 1, 2	4.30	4.70
21.1g 111111	4.00	4.75
111121	5.00	6.00
PC 111111	4.25	4.75
PC 111121	5.00	6.00
22g Flag 1, 7, 13	14.00	18.00
2, 5, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16	5.50	6.00
19, 21, 22, 71	25.00	65.00
3	6.50	9.00
4, 6, 11, 17, 18, 20, 21	37.00	48.00
14	—	—
(22g) "D" Eagle 1, 2	7.00	8.50
(22g) "D" Official 1	50.00	80.00
23g Lunch Wagon 2, 3	4.00	4.50
23g Flag A111, 212, 333	4.00	4.50
A222 1st middle 2	4.00	4.50
A222 2nd middle 2	5.00	5.50
A112, 122	5.00	5.50
23g USA A111, A222	4.00	4.50
Same, 1111	4.00	4.50
24.1g Tandem 1	4.85	5.30
25g Bread Wagon 1, 2, 3, 4	4.50	5.00
5	5.50	6.00
25g Yosemite		
Block 1, 7, Phos 15	9.50	10.00
Block 2, 3, 4, 5, 8	4.00	4.50
Block 9, Phos 5	11.50	12.00
Phos 1	59.50	60.00
Phos 2-3, 7-11, 13-14	4.00	4.50
Phos 6	17.50	18.00
(25g) "E" Earth 1211, 2222	6.50	7.00
1111, 1222	4.00	4.50
25g Honeybee 1, 2	4.00	4.50
1 Orig. full seal	26.50	27.00
(29g) "F" Tulip		
1111, 1222, 2222	4.00	4.50
1211	27.50	28.00
2211	6.50	7.00
29g Flower S1111, S2222		
S11	4.00	4.50
S2222 (Perforated)	4.50	5.00
29g Mt. Rushmore Flag		
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	4.00	4.50
7 Toledo brown F	142.50	145.00
7 Toledo brown VF	170.00	—
8, 9	8.50	9.25
A1111, A2221	4.00	4.50
29g White House Flag		
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	4.00	4.50
29g UVM 1 (29g PS/5)	9.40	10.00
\$1 Seaplane	7.00	9.00

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

TERMS: Cash with order, please. Ohio purchasers, please add 7% Cuyahoga County sales tax. Sorry, I do not accept credit cards.

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Gum breakers? Yup!

By Stephen G. Esrati

I was shocked when Richard Nazar called to say he had found the 2¢ Stravinsky with gum breakers.

"Gum breakers?" I said, "but they have dry gum."

"Yes," he said, "but they're there."

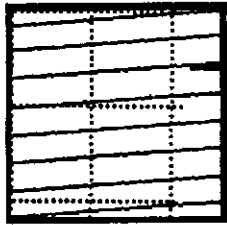
So I checked my stock and found several other stamps that also had what appeared to be gum breakers.

Trouble is, I did not know anything about gum breakers, since PNCs do not have them. So Rich sent me photocopies of two articles about gum breakers. That helped. According to Martin A. Armstrong (*U.S. Definitive Series 1922-1938*, Second Edition 1980, Trenton Publishing Co., Inc., Lawrenceville, N.J.) gum breakers were invented by Benjamin Stickney, who invented the rotary press.

BEP fired Stickney because the stamps from his press curled. After he was reinstated, he developed gum breakers to prevent curling.

Armstrong's book gives tips on detecting forged Kansas-Nebraska overprints (and other expensive U.S. stamps) simply by checking the gum breakers.

Armstrong showed a type of gum breaker that closely resem-



bles those found by Rich and me (Armstrong Type III). The breaker bars are slightly off the horizontal, running upward to the right when viewed from the gum side of the stamp. His measure about 12mm apart. Ours measure about 11mm apart.

But Nazar's second article solved that problem.

Bruce H. Mosher (*Discovering U.S. Rotary Booklet Pane*

GUM BREAKERS—11mm
Type IV (after Mosher).

Varieties 1926-1978, June 1979, Mosher Philatelics, Indialantic, Fla.) continued Armstrong's classifications and lists a Type IV that is spaced 11mm apart.

Mosher also clinches another argument:

The Bureau's conversion to pre-gummed dull-finish paper beginning with Scott No. 1510b panes made the continuing need for gum breakers questionable. However, the same production machines were used to produce the panes, so gum breakers were still impressed on dull-gum panes. The ridge impressions seem to be consistently less pronounced (shallower) on the dull-gum panes.

The following is a status report on gum breakers found on Great Americans printed on the Cottrell presses:

2¢ Stravinsky, 3¢ Clay, 4¢ Schurz, 5¢ Buck, 17¢ Carson, 19¢ Sequoyah, 20¢ Bunche, 35¢ Drew, 37¢ Millikan

In each instance, these stamps were also found without gum breakers. The task ahead, then, is to compile a list of each plate number for each stamp to indicate whether gum breakers are present. *TPN* will try to keep abreast of these reports and will incorporate them into the complete Summary of Data (which is being updated regularly).

The shiny gum stamps printed on the I-8 currency presses have not been found with gum breakers.

The 2¢ Lyon on Type I paper has also been found with gum breakers, but this time they measure about 5 or 6mm apart. Mosher describes three different types of breakers measuring 5.6, 5.7, and 6mm.

Ken Lawrence disagreed at first, saying gum breakers could

not possibly be on stamps with dull gum because they were not needed. He suggested that the PNC Study Group had once again fallen into the error of misusing a philatelic term, as happened when we first observed seam lines on the 25¢ Honeybee and incorrectly termed them "joint lines."

But Ken said he would defer to the expert in the field, Dr. Louis Fiset.

Dr. Fiset came out four-square in favor of Rich:

Ken's error lies in the assumption that what BEP does is always rational. Yes, it appears that the dull-gum finish has eliminated the paper-curl problem but, no, one should not assume that BEP ran to the perforators and removed the breaker roller bars right away.

If you look at the Americana issue dull-gum varieties, you'll see breakers on all of them. And they persisted right into the Great Americans set. All my copies, which I gathered during the early days of the series, bear breakers.

The ribs on the roller bars are chevron shaped, with the apex in the gutter. The apex may be pointing downward or upward, depending upon what roller bar was assigned to the perforator. I don't know when the roller bars were removed, as my research extends only as far as the Liberty Series, at this time.

Dr. Fiset has written a brochure, "Gum Breaker Markings on the U.S. Rotary Definitives 1919-1969: A Guide." While it will not help on the Great Americans, it is yours for a stamped, self-addressed envelope from him, c/o University of Washington, Mail Stop SM-35, Seattle, WA 98195. □

Data Bank of Official Information

USPS texts except for [bracketed] additions by TPN

Thomas Jefferson on Great Americans

Washington, D.C. (Jan. 29, 1993)—On April 13, 1993, a 29¢ definitive postage stamp featuring Thomas Jefferson will be issued in Charlottesville, Va., site of Monticello, the most famous of Jefferson's homes. The issue date marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Jefferson.

Issue: Thomas Jefferson

Format: Sheet of 100 [in arrangement that places six panes of 100 on a sheet numbers appear on top or bottom of center panes, in corners of outside panes.]

Denomination: 29¢

Manufacturing process: Intaglio (single-color engraving) [on a T/A Press]

Printer: Stamp Venturers [at its new Stamp Venturers plant in Ogdensburg, N.Y.]

Color: PMS 296 [This is a very dark blue. Original announcement said PMS 276, a very deep purple, but this was changed.]

Printer: Stamp Venturers

Plate Numbers: S1 [It is not certain that the T/A Press can print six panes (600 stamps) per revolution. It is believed that it pairs plates like the Cottrell presses and prints 12,000 stamps per revolution. This would mean that a plate marked "S2" would be printed simultaneously with "S1."]

[Paper: Prephosphored]

News Release 09

[The following limits the requirement about the use of endorsements with or overprints on 10¢ Tractor Trailer stamps.]

10¢ Precanceled Stamps

The Eagle and Shield nondenominated coil stamps, valued at 10 cents, are currently unavailable at some post offices. Third-class regular bulk mailers unable to buy the stamps should buy the 10¢ Tractor Trailer precanceled stamps, available in coils of 500 and 3,000. Customers who want to use precanceled stamps to prepay postage must have an authorized permit under *Domestic Mail Manual* (DMM) 143.14.

The bulk-rate endorsement, required by DMM 829.6, appears on the Eagle and Shield stamp but does not on the Tractor Trailer stamp. Until further notice, in order to accommodate customers who planned to use the Eagle and Shield stamps on mailpieces already designed or printed, authorized precanceled stamp permit holders may affix the Tractor Trailer stamps to third-class regular bulk rate mail without adding the endorsement "Bulk Rate" or the abbreviation "Blk. Rt." The identifying words "Carrier Route Presort" or the abbreviation "CAR-RT SORT" must appear on all precanceled stamped pieces entered at the carrier route presort rates as provided in DMM 629.63.

Postal Bulletin, 1-7-93

ULTRAVIOLET HANDHELD LAMPS



ULTRA-LUM HANDHELD LAMPS are powerful ultraviolet sources. A wide range of 24 models in a variety of ultraviolet wavelengths and wattages are available. This allows you to select the proper ultraviolet lamp for your specific need and application.

Each ULTRA-LUM lamp is manufactured with a silver anodized aluminum housing. This aluminum housing is durable and attractive. Its narrow profile design fits comfortably in the hand. Extending each lamp's versatility is the strap handle. This strap handle allows you to easily carry and facilitate the use of each lamp.

Inside each lamp a specular aluminum reflector is used to optimize ultraviolet irradiance. Properly placed for fingertip control, the ON/OFF switch is located on the end of the lamp. Standard with all ULTRA-LUM short wave (254nm) and mid range (300nm) ultraviolet lamps is the long life UV Transmitting Filter Glass. Assuring higher UV intensity for thousands of hours of use.

ULTRA-LUM lamps are available in three UV wavelengths: 254nm, 300nm and 365nm. Combination and DUAL-WAVE™ LAMPS are available as well.

Of the 24 different models available I recommend the following for the serious philatelist: **20% DISCOUNT**

MODEL NUMBER	WAVELENGTH	NO. OF TUBES	WATTAGE	NET WEIGHT	LIST PRICE	SALE PRICE
UVC-14	254nm S.W.	ONE	FOUR	1 lbs.	\$125.00	\$100.00
UVAC-16	365nm/254nm	TWO	TWO X SIX	2 lbs.	\$205.00	\$164.00

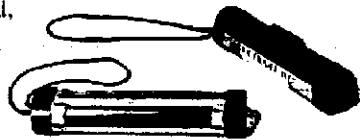
This Short Wave lamp is ideal for detecting US tagging varieties and searching for untagged errors. This combo short/long wave is the absolute best all around UV light on the market. Each separate bulb features 6 watts, 50% more than the one above and also, features long wave for identifying fluorescent paper and ink varieties; also used for detecting altered stamps, covers and documents.

LIGHT SHIELD for use with either lamp above (snaps on and off housing) \$15.00 **\$12.00**

INTRODUCTORY OFFER: FREE LIGHT SHIELD with purchase of either hand held light. Designed to shield stamps from extraneous visible light. Allows use of UV light even in a well lit room.

POCKET-SIZE ULTRAVIOLET LAMPS

Low cost, battery-operated, transistorized 4 watt lamps are compact and light weight. Two models are available; long wave (365nm) or short wave (254nm). Powered by four "AA" batteries (not included). A convenient carrying cord makes POCKET-SIZE ULTRAVIOLET LAMPS ideal for field use.



	\$ LIST	\$ SALE
UVC-04 254NM SHORT WAVE	\$ 29.95	\$24.20
UVA-03 365NM LONG WAVE	\$ 19.95	\$16.12

VERTICAL LAMP STAND	\$ 45.00	\$38.25
FLEX-MOUNT LAMP STAND	\$ 65.00	\$55.25
UNIVERSAL LAMP STAND	\$ 33.50	\$28.50

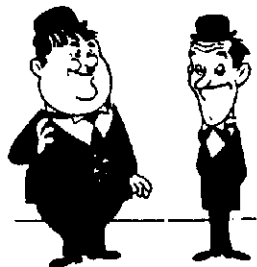
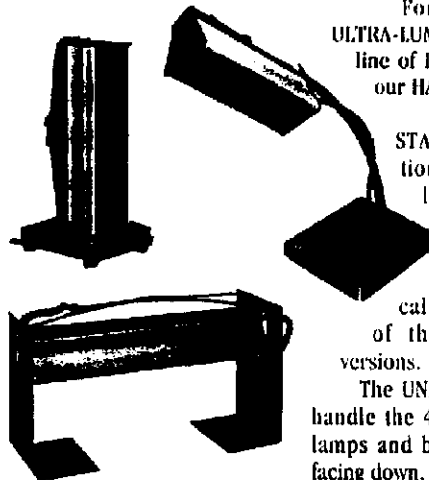
LAMP STANDS

For further convenience, ULTRA-LUM manufactures a versatile line of LAMP STANDS for use with our HANDHELD LAMPS.

The FLEX-MOUNT LAMP STAND allows variable positioning for the 4 and 6 watt lamps as well as a Quick Disconnect feature.

The VERTICAL LAMP STAND is for fixed vertical positioning and storage of the 4 and 6 watt lamp versions.

The UNIVERSAL LAMP STAND can handle the 4, 6, 8, dual 8 or 15 watt lamps and be positioned horizontally facing down, up or sideways.



"Stanley, did you know ULTRA-VIEW mounts and ULTRA-LUM lamps were meant for each other?"
"I didn't know that"

NEW ULTRA VIEW MOUNT PAGES FOR THE GREAT AMERICANS, ALL TAG VARIETIES VISIBLE, 9 PLATE BLOCKS PER SIDE, 18 PER PAGE, 6PAGES \$6.00. AS ALWAYS COILS @ ONLY \$6.00/PKG OF 25 STRIPS FOR MOUNTING 75 STRIPS OF 3 OR 50 STRIPS OF 5. (POSTAGE PAID) I BUY UNTAGGED ERRORS AND MAJOR TAG SHIFTS. SASE (#10) FOR LIST OF SIZES AND FREE SAMPLE OF LATEST UV MOUNT

CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS PLEASE ADD 7.75% CA STATE SALES TAX
30 DAY MONEY BACK GUARANTEE, UV HANDHELD LAMPS SHIPPED UPS, PLEASE ADD FREIGHT COST.
HARRY MUEGGENBURG, 3525 BLUFF COURT, CARMICHAEL CA 95608

How Great Americans fit on the Cottrell presses

When *TPN* turned its attention to the Great Americans, we knew a little about the Cottrell presses and how they tagged and precanceled coil stamps.

- The paper web was 18 inches wide.
- Each pane printed 18 strips of 24 stamps.
- Tagging was done by a tagging roller on Presses 801, 802, and 804.
- Press 803 was used to print precancel mats. To do this, precancel mats, 12 stamps wide and 9 stamps deep, were used.

After the fire that destroyed Presses 802 and 804, an attempt was made to print unprecanceled stamps on Press 803, but since it had no tagging roller, something had to be rigged to apply taggant. The result was that precancel mats were shaved (to remove the type) and converted into tagging mats.

When we discovered tagging breaks (untagged vertical and horizontal lines) on tagged stamps, we soon learned that they were caused by the edges of these converted precancel mats.

We also knew that all Cottrell printing always required a pairing of plates, so that stamps from Plate 1 would appear in the same roll of stamps as stamps from Plate 2.

But we couldn't quite figure out how all this looked when the Cottrells were printing the Great Americans.

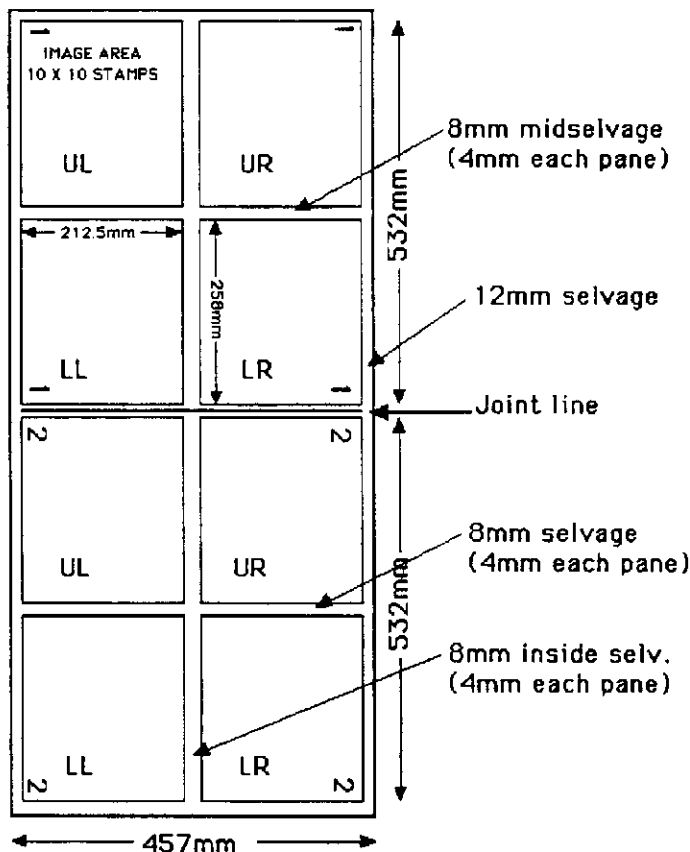
Alan Thomson sat himself down and made some calculations, based on the sizes of stamps, the known width of the paper web, and the fact that everything we knew about the paper on Cottrell-printed PNCs was now turned 90 degrees.

The accompanying layout, which is not drawn to scale, illustrates how the Great Americans fit on the Cottrell presses.

On the basis of Thomson's work, it is possible to make some other observations:

- Great Americans printed before the fire would have been tagged by a roller and should show no tagging breaks.
- Great Americans printed on Press 803 should show some form of tagging break. We now know that these show up as vertical untagged lines in the outside selvage of both plates (as we found on Plates 5 and 6 of the 2¢ Stravinsky).
- We cannot yet explain why some 2¢ Stravinsky stamps from those same plates have been found with no tagging breaks.

We have tried to figure out how the tagging mats used for the 2¢ Stravinsky with the tagging breaks might have looked. What we theorize is that a single mat was wrapped around the part of Press 803 that



COTTRELL GREATS—Alan Thomson's calculated sizes for printing Great Americans on a Cottrell press. The heavy line represents the web, which, of course, continues up and down.

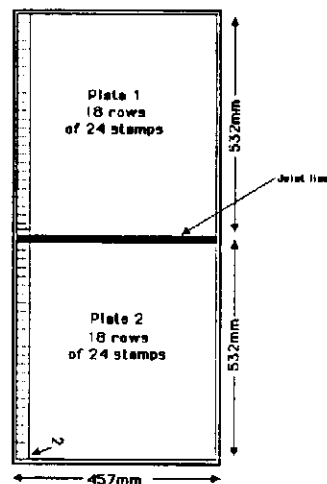
was used for precancel mats and was held on by a wire or other fastener that wrapped around the circumference of the mat.

In theory, this wrap-around mat should have an end, which would also produce a horizontal tagging break right across the pane of stamps. So far, this has not been reported.

According to Thomson's calculations, the Cottrells provided enough room to mount two Great Americans plates (each of four panes) with outside selvage of 12mm, and 4mm on the other three sides of each pane.

At the right is a schematic drawing of the Cottrells' PNC plates.

Both types of plate have a joint line, which may be seen below lower plate blocks or above upper plate blocks. □



HOW PNCs were printed on the Cottrell presses.

UPDATE: New stamps, new finds, new data, corrections

The Great Americans

All stamps off the A Press with floating plate numbers: Carol Morehouse has noticed that the interval between elements of the marginal marking differ from value to value, and even on different panes of the same value.

On the 1¢ Dix, for example, there are sometimes six spaces between two copy-right inscriptions and between two ZIP texts, and seven spaces between plate numbers. But some strips show a greater repeat on the textual material (not visible on the strip of 20, but only one of each inscription shows). One strip has only six spaces between plate numbers.

The following variations have been found (note, we are counting the spaces between the repeats):

Value	ZIP interval	@ interval	Plate number interval
6	6 and 7	6 and 7	6 and 7
7	6 and 7	6 and 7	7
9			6 and 7
10	7		
14			6 and 7
20	7		6 and 7
22	6 and 7	6	6 and 7
30		6 and 7	6 and 7
39	7	6	7
40	7		

2¢ Stravinsky—Paper type was incorrectly given as Type II on Plates 1-4. It should have been Type I.

Paper, ink difference found on new E&S

The new Eagle and Shield stamps (A7777 and A8888) come on a different paper and with different inks than the earlier stamps of the same design.

The new paper is hi-brite in both shortwave and longwave UV. The original paper appeared dead in both wave lengths.

Also, the red vertical lines in the shield of the original stamps fluoresced brightly. They no longer do. The red lines are now non-reflective in UV. □

Data Bank of Official Information

USPS texts except for [bracketed] additions by TPN

Coils of 12,000

[Postal Bulletin, 1-7-93, indicates that 2¢ and 5¢ coil stamps may be ordered in bulk in coils of 12,000.

[It also lists some stamps not announced by the Postal Service: a 29¢ Liberty Bell sheet stamp in panes of 100.]

Store of the Future Program

[Postal Bulletin, 1-7-93, also carries listings for stamps intended for the "Store of the Future Program," allowing the purchase of strips of 10 of the 10¢ Red Cloud, 35¢ Chavez, 23¢ Cassatt, 50¢ Nimitz, 52¢ Humphrey, 75¢ Willkie, and \$1 Hopkins (on which a "strip of 10" would have to be two strips of five). Strips of 20 are listed for the 5¢ Muñoz Marín and 23¢ Cassatt. Half panes of 50 are listed for the 23¢ Cassatt and 50¢ Nimitz.

[According to a Postal Service spokesperson, the "Store of the Future" is a new concept already in place in some shopping malls and office parks. Stamps are sold in bubble packs, and customers pick up what they want and pay at the checkout. It is supposed to alleviate standing in line.]

MY ERROR

The prices for the Toledo Brown varieties in my ad on Page 15 of the January issue should have been for pairs.

"Top of head missing" per PAIR: VF \$15; XF/S \$20. Electric Eye Marks, per PAIR, VF \$20; XF/S \$25

KIM CUNIBERTI, APS PNC³
P.O. BOX 3654, Danbury, CT 06813-3654
(203) 431-4303 anytime!

2¢ Stravinsky—Richard Nazar has found Plates 5 and 6 without tagging breaks. Additionally, the stamps without tagging breaks have gum breakers, while stamps with tagging breaks do not. The significance of gum breakers has yet to be explored. BEP reported only one date to press for Plates 5 and 6.

2¢ Lyon—Plate 2 was inadvertently omitted from the known varieties. It has the same characteristics as Plate 1.

2¢ Lyon—Plate 1 has also been found with Paper I.

4¢ Schurz—Ken Moreau has found a lower right plate block from Plate 1 with a vertical tagging break through the last column of stamps. It matches the find on the 2¢ Stravinsky.

5¢ Buck—Ken Moreau has found an upper right plate block from Plate 3 and a lower right plate block from Plate 4 with a vertical tagging break through the last column of stamps. They match the find on the 2¢ Stravinsky.

5¢ Muñoz—D. John Shultz reports panes from Plate 1 untagged as well as with very little taggant.

7¢ Baldwin—Tagging block is small, not a worn, large block.

8¢ Knox—Exists as untagged (error) on mint single. (Elser)

10¢ Russell—Confirmed as existing as an untagged error. (Meria)

10¢ Red Cloud untagged—Doug Iams writes: "I have just found a used, untagged 10¢ Red Cloud on piece. While that is not news by itself, what is interesting is the fact that it was used with a 2¢ Lyon and a 13¢ Christmas stamp, suggesting use during the 25¢ rate period (no date is present). If that is true, that would predate the copies that turned up early in 1992 around the time of the disputed announcement by Joe Peng of USPS of intentionally untagged 10¢ Red Clouds." Later, he found a used copy with a legible cancel: Jan. 16, 1990, or before the switch to untagged low values.

14¢ Lewis—The stamp was withdrawn from sale at the Philatelic Sales Division on June 30, 1987.

14¢ Lewis—Stamps with a small tagging block are reported by Ken Moreau. These may be on Paper I.

14¢ Howe—Diagonal electric-eye markings have been found on right panes by Ken Moreau.

15¢ Cody—The paper on the block tagged stamps is Type III.

15¢ Cody—Plate 2, off the C Press, which we reported as having no electric-eye markings, does have such markings. They are short and stubby, measuring 2mm vertically.

22¢ Audubon—Exists as untagged (error) with L Perforations on mint single (Elser).

40¢ Chennault—Richard Beecher has found an untagged error pane from the lower left of Plate 1.

50¢ Nimitz—Exists as mint, untagged single with shiny gum. (Elser)

\$1 Hopkins—Plate 1 is listed in the chart on Page 18 as existing with block and overall tagging as well as on mottled prephosphored paper. The report of an overall-tagged stamp may be wrong. TPN has never seen an overall-tagged Hopkins. Does anyone have any with untagged selva?

New PNCs

5T1Y—Plate 1 of the tagged 05 Circus Wagon from roll of 3,000 with tagging breaks at 6L and 20R. (Morrell) (Stamp previously known with only one tagging break in 52 stamps.)

6T1—Plate 1 of the 6¢ Tricycle, untagged. Jan 28. (Meyers)

10U(A88888)P—The 10¢ Eagle and Shield with the plate-number combination "A88888." Jan. 13. (Rabinowitz)

23F(A5555)PX—Plate-number combination "A5555" on 23¢ USA. Rolls of 500, Dec 15. (Rabinowitz, Haake, also Wigger)

New EKUs

25F3—Plate 3 of the block tagged 25¢ Flag over Yosemite: Jul. 27, 1988. (Wright)

TPN Corrections

Page 3—The overall tagged 2¢ Locomotive with a horizontal untagged stripe is on Plate 2 off the Cottrell Press, not the B Press. Since several of these stamps have been found with junctions of horizontal and vertical untagged breaks, this is not a new find. It is merely a continuation of the horizontal break to a stamp not showing a vertical break.

Page 6—The EPA ban on oil-based paints used by printers and on the amount of solvents in the air does affect some of the private printers, depending on which state their printing is done in. Connecticut, and California do have these bans. Los Angeles also limits the amount of alcohol that may be used in solvents.

Page 25—We missed the easiest way to differentiate between the BEP and ABN versions of the 23¢ USA Presort. Wolfgang Schön notes it's the gum. ABN's has maize gum and BEP's has super glossy gum.

Reader did well figuring out E&S printing totals

Before American Bank Note Co. provided us with exact impression totals of the "G" stamps, Mike J. Stefun worked them out.

He was able to compute correctly five of the six four-digit combinations, being wrong only on A11111, because those plates were also used to print a nonprofit G stamp. That was a pretty good, an .833 batting average.

Stefun also calculated Eagle and Shields, but was able to work out only a few exactly. They were A12213, A32333 and A53335. He batted 1.000 on those.

More importantly, Stefun recognized that stamps starting with A333 had short press runs and was right on target. And he did all this with incomplete or missing data for six plates!

Untagged \$1 Hopkins found

Ken Moreau has found an untagged \$1 Hopkins. He thought it was tagged on the gum side, but both sides of the stamp were untagged, although printed on a very fluorescent hi-brite paper that reacted as bluish white under both short- and long-wave UV.

EKU on Variable Coil

A utility bill paid to the city of Azusa, Calif., and postmarked on Nov. 3, 1992, was franked with a UVM.

Azusa is near Monterey Park, which has a Postal Mailing Center that dispenses UVMs. That could be the earliest EKU on commercial mail recorded so far. It was sent in by Richard Beecher.

Club offers a video

Robert L. Klein is chairman of the Smith Center Stamp Club in Skokie, Ill. Last year he ran a quiz in the club on the Great Americans and was amazed by how many were unknown to members. So he and the 12 members of the club did the necessary research and made a video, which is available from the club for a deposit of \$10 (\$5 is refunded after return). Write the club in care of Office of Human Services, Village of Skokie, Lincoln and Galitz Streets, Skokie, IL 60077.

Album for UV items

Harry Mueggenburg has done it again.

When he introduced his UV Mounts, he made it possible to mount tagging varieties in an album and still see their tagging characteristics without removing them from their mounts.

Now, he has introduced his Ultra View album pages, which do the same thing for either PNC strips or Great Americans plate

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

blocks.

The PNC pages (Size 9) have pockets for seven strips on each side of the page, permitting the mounting of strips up to 12 stamps in length.

The Great Americans pages (Size 14) have nine pockets large enough to hold a block of six.

The pages cost \$1 each.

But where are the prices?

It's not going to be easy to work up a specialized catalog of the Great Americans because hardly any dealer prices them by plate number.

Dick Lazarow of Plate Block Stamp Co., for example, says it is not worth the time and effort to sell by plate number, although he does supply plate blocks by position. TPN has been unable to find price lists by plate number. Reader help would be greatly appreciated.

New items from the cave

The January-March *Stamps etc.* listed two "new" coil stamps, the 23¢ USA (Item 7925A) in coils of 500, and the same stamp (Item 7926A) in coils of 3,000. These are the BEP version of the USA coil.

The catalog also added two Great Americans, the 50¢ Nimitz and the 75¢ Willkie, both on prephosphored paper.

The Nimitz stamp thus becomes the only Great American to have been issued in four forms, L/overall, Eureka/block, Eureka/overall, and Eureka/prephosphored. But the Willkie is a puzzler. We were told that the original Willkie was on prephosphored paper and believed it to be solid Lenz paper. Both new stamps have shiny gum and show streaky vertical tagging.

Sorry, wrong number!

Some collectors who service their own FDCs were surprised when they got back the BEP-printed version of the 23¢ USA. It should have been canceled in October in Kansas City, but came back with a Cincinnati cancel and the November date of the gravured 5¢ Circus Wagon.

Worth a little lumber

A weird thing happened to Jerry Koepp. A collector offered him a collection, and there was not much of anything in it. But there were three imperforate strips of three of the 19¢ Fishing Boat.

So Koepp asked the seller if he could get any more.

"I got them in a flea market," the seller said. "I paid \$2 a strip, but I paid the guy by selling him three ricks of wood."

The man who needed wood for his fireplace got the strips wet. But they appear to have been worth Koepp's while even though they were stuck together, because the man who sent them in thanked Koepp for his "generous" payment.

West Point mutineer honored

Don't feel bad if you don't recognize all the "great" Americans in the Great Americans Series. One of them, at least, doesn't deserve to be on a stamp: Capt. Alden Partridge, shown on the 11¢ value.

Partridge was graduated from West Point in 1906, then stayed on as an instructor. Later, he became acting superintendent.

He ran West Point as a personal fiefdom. His uncle ran the cadets' mess hall. His nephew was post adjutant. Still another relative ran a store that sold uniforms to cadets at outlandish prices.

When President James Monroe heard of all this, he replaced Partridge and ordered him court-martialed. Monroe picked Sylvanus Thayer (who is depicted on the 9¢ value) as the new superintendent.

On Aug. 23, 1817, Partridge paraded the Corps of Cadets and read the cadets an order (written by Partridge) appointing himself to command.

Partridge was court-martialed and convicted of mutiny.

Later in his career, he founded what has become Norwich University in Vermont. Believing in a citizen army, Partridge founded what is now known as the Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

DAV is surprised

Writing in *Stamp Collector*, Dr. Robert Rabinowitz reports that the DAV expected the rolls of 10,000 of the 5¢ Circus Wagon to be untagged and was surprised when they were not.

This will cause letter mailed back to the DAV to be thrown out of the mailstream for manual handling.

Meanwhile, *The Postal Bulletin* reports that post offices may order coils of 2¢ and 5¢ stamps in rolls of 12,000, but BEP prints nothing larger than 3,000 and Stamp Venturers and American Bank Note say they have produced no rolls of 12,000.

The DAV now splices four rolls of 3,000 to make rolls of 12,000. □

Great Americans I give up

In the past, I have advertised singles, blocks of four, inscription blocks, and ZIP and copyright blocks. But nobody was buying anything other than plate blocks. Be assured that I still have the other material and will gladly sell it to you. Just ask for it. My prices are fair and you have 30 days to return material, no questions asked.

From now on, however, I'll stick to plate blocks and inscription blocks in my ad.

Scott	Description	PBA	PLB	PE/20	Scott	Description	PBA	PW	PB/20
1844	14 Dix BL	1.00 (18E)	1.00 (1)	4.00 (1, 2)	1863	224 Audubon BL	WANT	2.65 (1)	13.30 (1)
1844	14 Dix BE	1.25 (1)	2.50 (1)	3.00 (1)	1863	224 Audubon OE	5.00 (3)		
2188	14 Mitchell BE	.25 (1)			2182	224 Cassatt BE	3.00 (1)		
1845	24 Strainsky Cottrill	.35 (1, 2, 4)			2182	224 Cassatt OE w/ break	5.75 (21)		
2189	24 Lyon BE	.35 (1, 2)			2182	224 Cassatt OE	WANT (21)		
1846	34 Clay Cottrill	.70 (1, 2)			2182	224 Cassatt PE	3.00 (2)		
2170	34 White BE	.50 (1, 3)			2183	254 London BE	3.00 (1)		
1847	44 Schurz Cottrill	.60 (3-4)		3.50 (4)	2184	284 Sitting Bull BE	3.50 (1)		
2171	44 Flanagan BE	.80 (1)			2184A	284 Warren PE	2.00 (81)	Inscr.	3.00
2171	44 Flanagan OE	.40 (1)			1884	304 Laubach BL	5.00 (1)	WANT	19.00 (1)
1848	54 Buck Cottrill	.70 (1-3)			1884a	304 Laubach BE	5.50 (2)		
2172	54 Black BE	.70 (1U)			1884a	304 Laubach OE	75.00 (2)		
2173	54 Muñoz OE	.75 (1U)	Inscr.	.70	1885	354 Drew Cottrill	4.50 (1, 2)		
2173	54 Muñoz UE	WANT (1)	Inscr.	.70	1885	354 Drew Cottrill	12.00 (4)		
1849	64 Lippmann BL	.60 SE	80 (1)	3.50 (1)	Plate 3, 4 wanted. Pay \$6 VF				
1850	74 Balchwin BL	.90 (1)	WANT	4.50 (1)	2185	354 Chavez PL	3.50 (S1, S2)	Inscr.	3.50
1851	84 Knox OL	1.20 (3-6)			1886	374 William Cottrill	4.50 (1-4)		
1852	94 Thayer BL	WANT	1.50 (1)	5.50 (1)	1887	394 Clark BL	8.00 (18E)	WANT	35.85 (1)
1853	104 Russell BL	1.20 SE	WANT	7.00 (1)	1887	394 Clark BE	5.00 (2)		
2178	104 Red Cloud BE	.85 (1)			1888	404 Gilbreth BL	0.75 (18E)	15.00 (1)	23.00 (1)
2178	104 Red Cloud OE	WANT			1888	404 Gilbreth BE	6.50 (2)		
2178	104 Red Cloud PE	.85 (2)			2188	404 Cherrault OE	4.00 (1)	Inscr.	5.90
1854	114 Partridge OL	1.60 (2-5)			2188	404 Cherrault PE	WANT		
1855	124 Crazy Cottrill	2.20 (1-3)			2188	454 Cushing BE	3.50 (1)		
1856	144 Lewis BE	1.20	WANT	9.00 (1)	2188	454 Cushing OE	3.00 (1)		
2178	144 Howe BE	1.80 (1)			1889	504 Nimtz OL	11.25 (3, 4)		
2178	154 Cody BE	WANT			1889	504 Nimtz OE	5.50 (1)		
2178	154 Cody OE	3.50 (2)			1889	504 Nimtz BE	7.50 (2)		
PB/20 with tagging break				10.00	Plate 2 wanted, pay \$8				
2178	154 Cody OE	1.25 (1, 2)			1889	504 Nimtz PE (shiny)	4.00 (2)		
2178	same w/ horiz break	5.00 (1, 2)			2190	524 Humphrey PE	3.45 (1)	Inscr.	4.50
2178	154 Cody OE	1.25 (2)			2181	564 Harvard	7.50 (1)		
2178	154 Cody PE	2.20 (1)			2182	654 Arnold BE	5.20 (1)		
1857	174 Carson Cottrill	2.85 (1, 4, 14)			2183	754 Willie PE (dull)	5.50 (1)	Inscr.	7.00
2179	174 Lockwood	2.00 (1)			2183	754 Willie PE (shiny)	5.50 (1)	Inscr.	7.00
2179	174 Lockwood	3.50 (2)			2194A	81 Hoplins BE	7.00 (1)		
1858	184 Mason Cottrill	3.50 (1-6)			2194A	81 Hoplins OE	7.00 (1)		
1859	194 Sequoyan Cottrill	3.00 (noth)			2194A	81 Hoplins PE	7.00 (1)		
1860	204 Buncha Cottrill	3.50 (1, 2, 5-6)		18.00 (4)	2194A	81 Hoplins PE Lertz	7.00 (2)		
1861	204 Gallaudet Cottrill	3.90 (1, 2)		18.00 (2)	2196	85 Harle BE	40.00 (1)		
1861	204 Gallaudet Cottrill	40.00 (9)			2196	85 Harle PE	35.00 (2)		
Plate 1, 8 wanted. Pay \$25 VF					These are not Great American stamps, but you probably don't have them.				
1862	204 Truman BL	5.00 (1)	WANT	13.00 (1)	1894	204 Flag BE Dull	10.00 (3)		
1862	204 Truman BE	3.90 (2)			1894	204 Flag BL Shiny	4.75 (2)	8.00 (2)	15.00 (2)
Special: matched set of four corner plate (2) blocks: \$15.00					1894	454 Langley OE	25.00		
1862	284 Trem OE Paper II	4.00 (3)			Abbreviations used in descriptions: Tagging: B-Block; O-Overall; P-Phosphorated; U-Unlabeled (or Unlabeled vintage)				
1862	284 Trem OE Paper III	4.00 (3)			Perforations: Ld, Perforator; F-Fairfax ball's eye; BE-Straight edge				
2179	214 Cartoon BE	3.20 (1)							

If you order singles, blocks of four, ZIP blocks or copyright blocks, please enclose \$15. All prices net; no discounts. I'll pay postage on orders over \$10.

I'm buying the items marked "WANT" and plate numbers not shown. Please make me an offer.

Prices subject to change. Some quantities limited.

Specials

23¢ Cassatt, Plate 2, overall tagged plate block with tagging break at bottom of block, proving it's overall tagged \$5.75

9.3¢ Mail Wagon, Plates 5 and 6, Gap 3L, hash mark 3R, strips of 10. VF \$45 each, \$85 for both; XF \$55 each, \$100 for both.

STEPHEN G. ESRATI

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

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.

\$25 REWARD for information leading to the purchase of matched sets of plate blocks of the 20¢ Gallaudet from Plates 8 and 9. Michael D. Kinney, 1430 Dally Ave., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494. (715) 424-5261 after 6 p.m. (2-93)

VRCs WANTED: Any printing errors, blanks, or other oddities. Will buy or trade. Have many PNC strips and PNC FDCs to trade. Bob Rowe, P.O. Box 150863, Nashville, TN 37215. (PNC3 2-93)

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

TRADE your mint U.S. postage for my PNCs. Send SADE for lists. Richard L. Beacher, 10779 Woodbine St. #302, Los Angeles, CA 90034. (PNC3 2-93)

ARE YOU A MIXTURE SORTER? TPN needs your reports of what you find. Especially needed now are reports on the 28¢ Rushmore, the 25¢ Yosemite (only if you separate block-tagged from phosphorated), the 29¢ White House, and the 10¢ Eagle and Shield. Please don't leave it to the other guy, join in the effort!

☆ 1993 PNC CATALOG, LATE BUT COMING ☆

The catalog will be printed soon. I will send out notices for pre-publication orders. Richard J. Nazar, 34 Nottingham Way, Somerset, NJ 08873. (2-93)

WANTED: Commercial covers of any Cottrill precancel PNC and any 10¢ Eagle/Shield PNC. Top prices paid. Rob Washburn, PO Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976. (PNC3 2-93)

PNCs BY SUBSCRIPTION: My customers got A32333 and A33334 of the Eagle & Shield cheap. 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. Send \$25 deposit to Esrati, POB 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. (2-93)

PNC FDCs by SUBSCRIPTION: House of Farnam FDCs are \$5, ArtCraft and ArtMaster are \$4. You also are informed when I get oddball numbers. Send \$25 deposit to Esrati, POB 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. (2-93)

LIGHTHOUSE SUPPLEMENTS—15% off on all Lighthouse PNC supplements, Lighthouse UV lamps, Lighthouse stock books, or Lighthouse albums. An additional 5% off to members of PNC3. Esrati, POB 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. (2-93)

JOIN PNC3 For details, write Joann Lenz, 37211 Alper Dr., Sterling Hts. MI 48312-2203. (2-93)

1990 and 1991 PNC catalogs are sold out and out of print. Earlier ones are still available at \$5 postpaid. Esrati, POB 20130, Shaker Heights, OH 44120. (2-93)

GREAT AMERICANS for sale. Some plate blocks of 20 and other material. Send SADE for details and prices. Carol Morehouse, POB 777, Carlisbad, CA 92018. (2-93)

Lighthouse supplements

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

Steve Esrati

POB 20130
Shaker Heights, OH 44120
(216) 561-9393

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

Cat. No.	6L	5L	4L	3L	2L	1L	1R	2R	3R	4R	5R	6R	Symbols, abbreviations B = Bar (vertical) C = Clip (T-shaped) S = Screw head Clips and screw heads also show bar breaks. Clip and screw locations: t-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.
2T2 2T6 2T8 2T10		B Sib B Sib B Sib B Sib	B Sib J B Sib J B Sib J B Sib J	B Cib Sib B Ct Sib B Cibc J B Cibc J	B Cib J B Cib J B Cibc J B Cibc J								
5T1 5T2 5T3 5T4		B Sb B Sb	B Sib J B Sib J	B Cib J B Cib J	B Cib J B Cib J	B Cib J B Cib J				B Sib B Sib	B Sib J B Sib J	Sib Sib	
5.2T3 5.2T5			B St % B Sl %										
17T1 17T2 17T3 17T4				B Cib J B Cib J B Cibc J B Cibc J	B Cib J B Cib J B Cibc J B Cibc J				Sb 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

17T4, 3R found used as a PS/4.
17T3, 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 perfor.) 12L, 11L, 10L, 9L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L, 3L, 2L, 1L, Line, 1R, 2R, 3R, 6R, 8R, 9R, 10R, 11R, 12R, 20R

5T1Y # 13L, 10L, 8L, 7L, 6L, 5L, 4L7, 3L, 2L, 1L, 3R, 4R, 5R, 8R, 12R

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

\$1T1 12L, 11L

5T1Y Circus Wagon is confirmed with only one break in 52 stamps*, but also with 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
\$1T1 Top, bottom

Ernst welcomes new reports.

New start on time lines results in new insights

By Stephen G. Esrati

Preliminary work has begun on the time lines to incorporate data from the printing of Great Americans on the Cottrell presses into material we previously knew about PNCs.

The method this time was slightly different, allowing the computer to do more of the work we previously did by hand.

The 2¢ Locomotive

The first thing that popped up out of the data was the reason BEP had such problems with the 2¢ Locomotive when it attempted to print Plates 3 and 5 on Cottrell 803.

As we now know, thanks to Kim Cuniberti's $e=mc^2$, Press 803 was a press dedicated to printing precancels. It had no capacity to tag stamps before the fire that destroyed Presses 802 and 804 on March 5, 1982.

What we noticed in our new time lines work-up was that BEP reported that on April 14, 1982, it tried to print Plate 5 Locomotives on Press 803.

Of course, we knew all that when we did our analysis of the 2¢ Locomotive, but the significance of the use of Press 803 was not yet understood.

BEP reported that it made 1,440 impressions off Plate 5.

What we said (TPN, July 1989) was:

Plate 5 was sent to press April 14, 1982, paired with Plate 3. Only 1,440 impressions were printed from it, so it must have had problems before being replaced by Plate 4 on the 16th.

We believe all stamps printed from the pairing of Plate 5 with Plate 3 were shredded.

On the next day, April 15, BEP put Plates 1 and 2 on press. Plate 1 also ran into trouble and was probably pulled off the press that very day.

What is now clear is that we were assuming the plates were bad. This may not have been the case, at all. It is possible that the attempt to print tagged stamps on Press 803—using make-shift tagging mats that had been made from

shaving the type off precancel mats and finding a way to fasten them to the press—may have been at fault.

13¢ Crazy Horse

The first stamp BEP reported printing on Press 803 after the fire was the 13¢ Crazy Horse from Plates 3 and 4. The press date was April 8, 1982.

The stamps were reprinted in October and November 1984.

Examination of plate blocks from Plate 3 immediately showed that one block was badly tagged, having only tiny tagging specks all over. Another block was normally tagged. Both blocks are on Type I paper.

This type of strange tagging has been previously found on Plates 3 and 4 of the 17¢ Electric Auto.

But the two similar taggings appear unrelated. The 17¢ Auto was not printed on Press 803 after the fire, at least insofar as the plate-activity reports indicate. Also, the Autos with the strange tagging are on Paper II, while the Crazy Horses are on Paper I.

Gum breakers

We never even heard of gum breakers (they do not exist on any PNCs) until Rich Nazar started examining his plate blocks from Plates 5 and 6 of the 2¢ Stravinsky.

He was looking for the tagging breaks illustrated in January's TPN, and he found them on one set of blocks. But on another set of identical blocks, the tagging breaks were not present, but the stamps had gum breakers, spaced about 11mm apart.

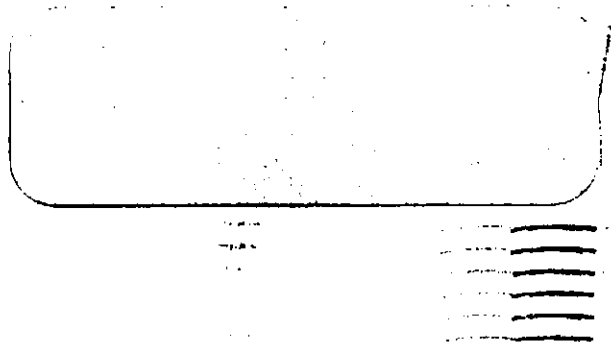
We do not yet know why there should be gum breakers on stamps with dull gum. We did, however, find gum breakers on several other Great Americans values. (See article on Page 44.)

Surprisingly, none of the stamps we have examined that have shiny gum have been found with gum breakers, and those are the stamps on which we would most have expected them. □

ROB'S COVER OF THE BI-MONTH



Don't think twice.



RARE, BUT STILL NOT DURING RATE PERIOD—This cover features a 21.1¢ precanceled Letters stamp with the plate numbers 111111. This is one of three commercial covers known with this stamp. It received a machine cancel on the back dated May 28, 1988, indicating that

this is a false franking during the 24.1¢ rate period. (If you have a candidate for Cover of the Bi-Month, please send a photocopy of your cover against a black background to Rob Washburn, PO Box 840, Skowhegan, ME 04976.)

BEP's 'bad' USA presort stamp gets a recall

This is the second chapter in the saga of BEP's version of the 23¢ USA presort stamps.

In the first chapter, a mailer in Salt Lake City complained that his automated equipment was unable to affix the stamps. At first he believed that the stamps were imperforate. It turned out that they were not.

He was told that the stamps had jammed in his machinery because the gum was too thick.

The mailer was still unhappy. He went "all the way to the top" with his complaints.

Postal Headquarters determined that it

was not the gum at all. It said the problem was with the perforations.

The standard gauge on U.S. coil stamps is supposed to be 10.

TPN measured its own copies of both versions, which may differ from those in Salt Lake City. The ABN versions of the stamp measure 9.85. So do the stamps from BEP.

The diameter of each perforation hole measures 10.0mm on both versions.

When the two strips are placed one on top of the other, the holes line up perfectly.

Yet there is more to this than *TPN's* inability to find what is wrong.

The accountable paper supervisor in Salt Lake City was told that BEP is printing new stamps to replace the "bad" ones and that when they arrive, she was to destroy the "bad" stamps still on hand.

Meanwhile, the mailer was told that his problems would soon be over because self-adhesive coils would soon be available for use by his machinery; all it would take is a minor adaptor that would peel the sticky stamps from their backing.

This is the first that *TPN* has heard of plans to make machine-usable self-adhesive coils. But then again, you can't get much news from the Ministry of Late Information at USPS. □

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

Scott	Stamp	L/block	L/Overall	Harrow/block	Harrow/overall	Harrow/phosphored	Untagged
1844	1c Dix	L (1, 2)		A (1)			
2171	4c Flanagan			E (1)			E (1) Intentionally
2173	5c Muñoz Marin				E (1)†		E (1) Error (2) Intentionally
2176	10c Red Cloud			E (1)	E (1)*†, 2†	F (2)F	E (2) Error
2178	15c Cody			E (1, 3)	E (1)*, 2†, 3†	⇒ F (1) (disputed)	E (3) Error
1862	20c Truman	L (1)		E (2)	E (3)†		E (2) Error
1863	22c Aucubon	L (1)		E (3)			L (1) Error
2182	23c Cassatt			E (1)	E (1)*†, 2*†	F (2)F	E (1) Error
2197a	25c London \$5 book			E (1, 2)†			
2183a	25c London books ☆						E Error
1864	30c Laubach	L (1)		E (2)	E (2)†		
1867	39c Clark	L (1)		E (2)			
1868	40c Gilbreth	L (1)		E (2)			
2186	40c Cherravil				E (1)†	F (2)	E (1) Error
2188	45c Cushing				E (1)†		E (1) Error
1869	50c Nimitz		1* (1, 2, 3, 4)	E (1, 2)	E (2, 3*)	3 (shiny gum)	L (2) E (1, 2) Error
2193	75c Willkie					1E (dull gum) 1 (shiny)	
2194A	\$1 Hopkins			E (1)	E (1)	F (1)μ, 2)	E (1) Error
2196	\$5 Harte			E (1)		F (2)F	

Symbols used in this chart:

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

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

* Printed on an I-8 currency press. Tagged off press. All have shiny gum.

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

⇒ The existence of 15c Cody on prephosphored paper is in doubt. See Page 24 of January issue.

Entries printed in boldface type indicate that they are new or have been changed since the last report.

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

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

Scott	Stamp	E-E/Cottrell Overall	L/block	L/Overall	Harrow/block	Harrow/overall	Harrow/phosphored	L/phosphored	Untagged
2168	1c Mitchell				E (1)				E Error
2169	2c Mary Lyon				E (1, 2)				E (1) Error
1845	2c Stravinsky	1,2,3,4,5,8							E-E Error
1846	3c Clay	1,2							E-E Error
2170	3c White				1,2,3				E Error
1847	4c Schurz	1,2,3,4							E-E Error
1848	5c Buck	1,2,3,4							
2172	5c Black				E (1,2)				E (2) Error
1849	6c Lippmann		1						
1850	7c Baldwin		1						
1851	8c Knox			3,4,5,6*					L (?) Error
1852	9c Thayer		1						
1853	10c Russell		1						L Error
1854	11c Partridge			2,3,4,5*					L Error
1855	13c Crazy Horse	1,2,3,4							E-E Error
1856	14c Lewis		1						
2177	14c Howe				E (1,2)				
1857	17c Carson	1,2,3,4,13,14,15,16							E-E Error
2179	17c Lockwood				E (1,2)				E Error
1858	18c Mason	1,2,3,4,5,6							E-E Error
1859	19c Sequoyah	39529, 39530							
1860	20c Bunche	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,13							E-E Error
1861	20c Gallaudet	1,2,5,6,8,9							
2180	21c Carlson				E (1)				
2183	25c London sheet				E (1,2)				
2184	28c Sitting Bull				E (1)				
2184A	29c Warren						S1, S2μ		
1865	35c Drew	1,2,3,4							
2185	35c Chavez							S1, S2μ	
1866	37c Millikan	1,2,3,4							E-E Error
2190	52c Humphrey						1E		
2161	56c Harvard				E (1)				
2192	65c Arnold				E (1)				E Error
2194	\$1 Raval				E (1)				E Error
2195	\$2 Bryan				E (2)				E Error

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

A roundup of available data and comparisons with PNCs

Part II

(Continued from January issue)

17¢ Belva Ann Lockwood

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
176368-1	04/10/85		702	800	04/28/86	11/06/86	556,100
176754-2	05/22/86		702	800	06/02/86		
176796-3	06/03/86		702	800	NEVER	09/15/87	NONE

Known Lockwood varieties

Plates 1, 2: Block tagging. Electric-eye perforator. Paper III. No E-E

17¢ Lockwoods were taken off sale at the PSD June 30, 1991.

18¢ George Mason

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
39523-1	03/13/81	04/02/81	802	800	04/17/81	11/24/86	437,001
39524-2	03/13/81	04/02/81	802	800	04/17/81	11/24/86	437,002
39526-3		04/07/81	802	800	04/25/81	06/05/81	352,896
39526-4	03/16/81	04/07/81	802	800	04/25/81	11/24/86	362,896
39544-5	03/19/81	04/29/81	802	800	04/28/81	11/24/86	349,082
39560-6	03/27/81	04/29/81	802	800	04/28/81	11/24/86	349,083
39731-7	05/26/81		802	800	09/23/81	11/24/86	NONE
39732-8	05/26/81		802	800	09/23/81	11/24/86	NONE
39752-9	06/12/81		802	800	09/23/81	11/24/86	NONE
39753-10	06/12/81		802	800	09/23/81	11/24/86	NONE

The 18¢ George Mason stamp was printed entirely on Cottrell Press 802. Like the 18¢ Flag and the 18¢ Surrey coils, it became obsolete in the rate hike to 20¢. It was taken off sale at the PSD Dec. 31, 1985.

Known Mason varieties

Plates 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: Overall tagging. Electric-eye perforator. Paper I. E-E

19¢ Sequoyah

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
39529	11/14/80		804	800	12/11/80	11/24/86	155,257
39530	11/14/80		804	800	12/11/80	11/24/86	155,257
39531	11/14/80		804	800	12/11/80	11/24/86	NONE
39532	11/14/80		804	800	12/11/80	11/24/86	NONE

The 19¢ Sequoyah was the first stamp issued in the Great Americans Series. It went off PSD sale on June 30, 1991, and was replaced by the 19¢ Fawn of the Wildlife Series.

The Sequoyah is the only stamp among the Great Americans that still has five-digit plate numbers, which were in use before plate-number codes were adopted.¹⁵

Known Sequoyah varieties

Plates 39529 and 39530: Overall tagging. Electric-eye perforator. Paper I. E-E

Plate 3 is known with a tagging that resembles the sort found on Plates 3 and 4 of the 17¢ Electric Auto on Type II paper, although the Sequoyah is on Type I paper. The tagging appears almost untagged, with tiny specks of taggant randomly scattered across the stamps almost like stars in the sky.

20¢ Ralph Bunche

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
39958-1	DEC 81	11/21/81		800	11/22/81	12/22/81	205,824
39959-2	DEC 81	11/21/81		800	11/22/81	12/22/81	205,824
39960-3	DEC 81	11/28/81		800	12/01/81	12/22/81	110,736
39961-4	DEC 81	11/28/81		800	12/01/81	12/22/81	110,736
39983-5	DEC 81	12/11/81		800	12/11/81	02/01/82	520,801
39984-6	DEC 81	12/11/81		800	12/11/81	01/27/82	521,306
39985-7	DEC 81	01/16/82		800	01/16/82	10/20/82	483,596
39986-8	DEC 81	01/16/82		800	01/16/82	08/10/82	336,099
39987-9	DEC 81	NEVER		800	NEVER	07/22/82	NONE
39988-10	DEC 81	01/29/82		800	01/28/82	11/21/84	506,769
40031-11	DEC 81	01/29/82		800	01/28/82	11/21/84	506,769
40032-12	DEC 81	NEVER		800	NEVER	07/22/82	NONE
40048-13	JAN 82	07/26/82		800	09/18/82	01/27/83	149,000
40049-14		NEVER		800	NEVER	02/13/84	NONE
40450-15	DEC 82	NEVER		800	NEVER	02/13/84	NONE
40451-16	DEC 82	NEVER		800	NEVER	02/13/84	NONE

The first of the 20¢ stamps in the Great Americans Series was the Ralph Bunche stamp, printed entirely on Cottrell presses.

The Great Americans

Known Bunche varieties

Plates 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13: Overall tagging. Electric-eye perforator. Paper I. E-E

The Bunche stamp was replaced by the 20¢ Thomas H. Gallaudet, and was withdrawn from sale at the PSD on Feb. 28, 1985.

20¢ Thomas H. Gallaudet

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
40348-1	MAY 83	04/11/83		800	04/11/83	11/21/84	621,750
40349-2	MAY 83	04/11/83		800	04/11/83	11/21/84	621,750
40350-3	MAY 83	04/11/83		800	04/11/83	11/21/84	UNKNOW
40351-4	MAY 83	04/11/83		800	04/11/83	11/21/84	UNKNOW
40382-5	MAY 83	04/19/83		800	04/20/83	05/13/83	118,750
40393-6	MAY 83	04/19/83		800	04/20/83	05/13/83	118,750
40608-7	MAY 83	02/28/84		800	NEVER	11/21/84	NONE
40630-8	MAY 83	09/29/83		800	09/30/83	11/21/84	93,000
40631-9	MAY 83	09/29/83		800	09/30/83	11/21/84	93,000
40685-10	JUN 83	NEVER		800		11/27/84	NONE
40686-11	JUN 83	NEVER		800		11/27/84	NONE

Gallaudet sales ended Dec. 31, 1985. Collectors have found stamps from Plates 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, and 9. Plate blocks from Plates 8 and 9 are scarce and command a hefty premium. All Gallaudet stamps were printed on Cottrell presses.

Known Gallaudet varieties

Plates 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9: Overall tagging. E-E perforator. Paper I (Plates 1, 2) E-E

The Gallaudet stamp was replaced by the 20¢ Truman, which is still on sale at the PSD.

20¢ Harry S. Truman

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
40805-1	11/18/83		702	920	12/16/83	04/03/86	1,651,500
40806-1	11/18/83		702	920	03/18/84		
180323-2	06/02/88		702	800			
185681-3	02/08/80		702	800			

Known Truman varieties

Plate 1: Small block tagging, L-perforations. Paper IIa. E-E

Plate 2: Large block tagging, bull's eye perforations. Paper III. No E-E

Plate 3: Overall tagging, bull's eye perforations. Papers IIIb and IIIc. No E-E

The Truman stamp started out with Plate 1 on the A Press using the 920 SPR arrangement, with floating plate numbers, block tagging, and L-perforations. Plate 2 was changed to the 800 SPR arrangement, but still used block tagging, along with bull's eye perforations. By the time Plate 3 was put into production, tagging changed to overall.

21¢ Chester Carlson

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
180918-1	09/19/88		702	800			

There are no production data on the 21¢ Chester Carlson stamp, which remains on sale at the PSD.

Known Carlson varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging. Bull's-eye perforator. Paper III. No E-E

22¢ John J. Audubon

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
41193-1	JAN 85		702	920	02/05/85		
41193-1	JAN 85		702	920	03/04/85		
174270-2	05/20/85		702	800	NEVER	12/23/86	NONE
177663-3	01/08/87		702	800	JUNE 87	12/14/88	468,000

The 22¢ John J. Audubon stamp began life on the A Press in the 920-stamp arrangement. Stamps with floating plate numbers went off sale at the PSD Dec. 31, 1987. Stamps with bull's eye perforations and block tagging stayed on sale until Dec. 31, 1990.

Paper and gum

Unless otherwise stated, all stamps have dry, yellowish gum. Paper designations are those of PNCs, but Type II Paper has vertical gum striations.

Known Audubon varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging, L-perforations. Paper II. E-E

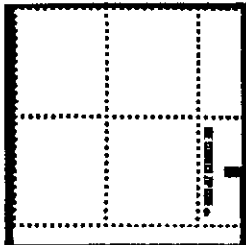
Plate 3: Block tagging, bull's eye perforations. Paper III. No E-E

23¢ Mary Cassatt

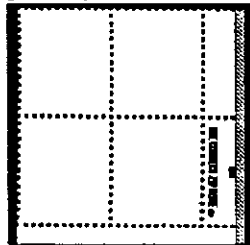
Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
175588-1	11/15/85		702	800	04/29/86	04/30/91	702,585
188338-2	03/20/81		901	800	04/09/81		

The 23¢ Mary Cassatt stamp is one that gives collectors a great deal of trouble. It is known with block tagging, overall tagging, and on prephosphored paper. But the latter two are difficult to differentiate.

Plate 1 is known with block tagging and with overall tagging. But the overall-tagged stamps have tagging in the selvage. That means that the sure-fire test of marginal copies for overall tag-



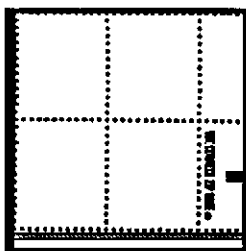
OVERALL TAGGING— Tagged selvage leaves no way to distinguish this from prephosphored paper.



OVERALL TAGGING— Untagged selvage is certain way to distinguish this from prephosphored paper.

ging cannot be made. That test finds untagged selvage to determine absolutely that tagging was applied by a cylinder. The edge of the tagging cylinder results in an untagged area in the selvage.

But there is a second method. On some stamps with tagged selvage, a horizontal tagging break appears across the top or bottom of the pane. This is caused by the seam at the end of a tagging mat, where it butts up against the other end of the mat on the press.



OVERALL TAGGING—Seam at the edge of the tagging mat leaves an untagged stripe horizontally across the top or bottom of the pane, proving overall tagging.

Panes not showing this horizontal break are the result of a change in tagging methods at BEP. According to Yeager,¹³ the A Press originally did its tagging by use of a butyl jacket mounted on the tagging cylinder. This produced no seam lines (untagged horizontal stripes on stamps) while the C and D presses used a flexographic plate made from a polymer material that had one seam. Yeager said the A Press was to be converted in 1991 to the system in use on the C and D presses.

The best way to differentiate between the overall-tagged Cassatts with tagged selvage (they also come with untagged selvage and with horizontal tagging breaks) and those printed on prephosphored paper may be the one that is least obvious, the color of the paper in ordinary sunlight (not fluorescent or incandescent).

Overall tagging makes the stamps appear to have been printed

on a creamy paper; prephosphored paper is snow white.

Known Cassatt varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging, bull's-eye perforations. Paper III. E-E

Plate 1: Overall tagging, bull's eye perforations (selvage is tagged but also untagged)

Plate 2: Overall tagging, bull's eye perforations (selvage is tagged but also untagged) (Stamps from Plate 2 with untagged selvage are known with horizontal tagging breaks); Prephosphored paper (dull gum Lenz, no mottling)

25¢ Jack London sheet

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
175561-1	10/25/85		702	800		11/13/85	
179583-2	01/21/88		702	800			
189302-3	08/07/81		902	800			

The 25¢ Jack London sheets were the first to be printed in the new 800-SPR arrangement.¹⁶

While there are no tagging or perforation varieties on the 25¢ Jack London sheet stamp, which is still on sale at the PSD, there are differences among the booklets.

Known London sheet varieties

Plates 1, 2: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's-eye perforations

To complicate matters, BEP reported the sheet stamps from Plate 2 as being from booklets. But only Plates 1 and 2 are known from sheet stamps. If Plate 3 is found, it should have overall tagging or be on prephosphored paper.

BEP failed to keep its promise to collectors when it made two plates with the suffix "1" for the London booklets.¹⁷ The \$1.50 booklet was withdrawn from sale on June 30, 1991; the \$3 booklet was taken off sale on April 30, 1991, and the \$5 booklet on Dec. 31, 1990. Scott gives different catalog numbers to the two types of booklet.

25¢ Jack London booklet (\$1.50 and \$3.00)

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
179749-1	02/25/88		901	864	03/07/88	02/01/91	373,438
179749-1			902	864		09/25/80	

25¢ Jack London booklet (\$5.00)

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
179696-1	02/17/88		702	800	03/27/88	09/23/88	1,215,300
179795-2	03/04/88		702	800	03/24/88	07/29/91	3,474,200
179795-2			702	800		08/01/88	

Known London booklet varieties

\$1.50 and \$3 booklets: Block tagging. Paper II. Perforation done on Goebel booklet-making equipment measures 10×9.8.

\$5 booklet: Block tagging. Paper III. Eureka bull's-eye perforations measuring 11.2×11.2

28¢ Sitting Bull

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
182644-1	04/25/89		702	800	05/09/89	04/30/91	172,000

The 28¢ Sitting Bull stamp is still on sale at PSD. Only one plate was made.

Known Sitting Bull varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations

29¢ Earl Warren (with descriptive selvage)

The 29¢ Earl Warren stamp was printed in Canada by Canadian Bank Note Co., as subcontractor for Stamp Venturers. The stamps are known with the plate numbers "S1" and "S2," and have bull's eye perforations. They were printed on mottled prephosphored paper with shiny gum on a T/A Press..

The stamps were printed at 1,200 SPR with two sheets of six panes set up as three across and two deep. The outer panes had corner plate numbers. The middle panes had them at top or bottom edges. Plate numbers S1 and S2 were printed at the same time and the stamps have descriptive selvage.

Known Warren varieties

Plates S1, S2: Mottled prephosphored paper. Bull's-eye perforator.

29¢ Jefferson

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
S1			TA	600			

The 29¢ Jefferson is to be issued in April 1993. It will probably be paired with Plate S2.

30¢ Frank C. Laubach

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
40996-1	06/12/84		702	920	07/11/84	03/21/88	475,000
179854-2	03/21/88		702	800	04/07/88		

The 30¢ Frank C. Laubach stamp has become the star of the Great Americans with the price on the overall-tagged stamp climbing sharply. Caution is advised, however, since many post offices still have stocks of the stamp.

Stamps with floating plate numbers (Plate 1) were withdrawn from sale at the PSD on Feb. 28, 1989. Plate 2, which includes stamps with overall tagging, went off sale on Aug. 31, 1991. The stamp was replaced by the Wildlife's 30¢ Cardinal.

We are obviously missing a report from BEP on when it sent Plate 2 back to press.

Known Laubach varieties

- Plate 1: Block tagging (small). L-perforations. Paper IIa. E-E
- Plate 2: Block tagging (large). Bull's eye perforations. Paper III. No E-E
- Plate 2: Overall tagging, bull's eye perforations, selvage is untagged. Paper IV.

35¢ Charles R. Drew MD

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
39597-1	04/17/81		802	800	05/14/81	11/24/86	236,188
39598-2	04/17/81		802	800	05/14/81	11/24/86	236,190
39599-3	04/17/81		802	800	05/22/81	11/24/86	12,098
39700-4	04/17/81		802	800	05/22/81	11/24/86	12,098

The 35¢ stamp depicting Dr. Charles R. Drew was printed in its entirety on Cottrell 802 before it was destroyed by fire.

It was withdrawn from sale Oct. 31, 1987, because the rate was no longer in use.

All four plates are known, but the printing totals for Plates 3 and 4 are low. Plate blocks 3 and 4 carry a large premium.

Known Drew varieties

- Plates 1, 2, 3, 4: Overall tagging. Paper I. Electric-eye perforator.

35¢ Dennis Chavez (with descriptive selvage)

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
S1	02/20/91		TA	600	2/20/92		456,108
S2	02/20/91		TA	600	2/20/92		456,108

A 35¢ Dennis Chavez stamp was issued in 1991 to meet a new postal rate. Like the 29¢ Earl Warren, the Chavez stamp was printed in Canada using the same six-pane arrangement, giving two of the panes plate numbers at top or bottom. The stamps are on mottled prephosphored paper with shiny gum. Oddly, they have L-perforations.

Stamp Venturers explained that in printing these stamps, Plates 1 and 2 were both on press, and each revolution of the press produced 300 stamps of each plate number.

Since the plates have not been canceled, the impression total is subject to upward revision in the event of a reprinting.

Known Chavez varieties

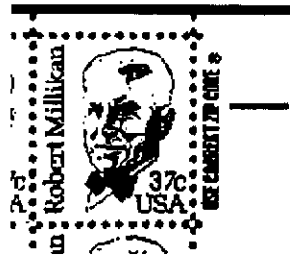
- Plates S1, S2: Mottled prephosphored paper. L-Perforator

37¢ Robert Millikan

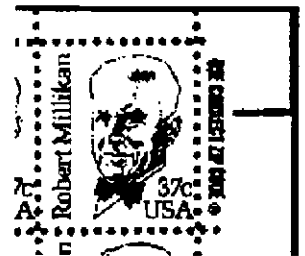
Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
39974-1	11/12/81		802	800	12/08/81	11/24/86	490,170
39974-1				800	08/06/84		
39975-2			802	800	12/08/81		490,170
39975-2	11/12/81		802	800	08/06/84	11/24/86	
39976-3	11/12/81		802	800	12/08/81	11/24/86	
39976-3			802	800	12/18/81		411,494
39977-4	DEC 81	12/18/81		800	11/21/81	09/27/84	411,494
39977-4				800	12/08/81	11/24/86	
39977-4				800	12/18/81		
41085-5	08/08/84		801	800	NEVER	11/04/85	NONE
41087-6	08/08/84		801	800	NEVER	11/04/85	NONE

Four plates of the 37¢ Robert Millikan were printed on Cottrell 802 before it was destroyed.

The stamp is unusual in that it is known on Plate 4 with an in-



Inverted



Normal

verted ZIP inscription (see illustrations above).

It is, of course, impossible that the return to press in 1984 was on Press 802, because that press was out of service. The reprinting may have produced paper varieties.

Known Millikan varieties

- Plates 1, 2, 3, 4: Overall tagging. Paper I. Electric-eye perforator.
- The 37¢ Millikan was removed from PSD sale Dec. 31, 1987.

39¢ Grenville Clark

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
41152-1	JAN 85		702	920	01/18/85		
177529-2	12/02/86		702	800		12/09/86	

The 39¢ Grenville Clark made the transition on the A Press from 920 SPR to 800 SPR and, therefore, exists with floating plate numbers as well as the normal arrangement.

The Clark stamps with floating plate numbers were withdrawn from sale on Aug. 31, 1987, while those with four plate-block positions were on sale until Aug. 31, 1992.

Known Clark varieties

- Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper III. L-perforations
- Plate 2: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations

40¢ Lillian Gilbreth

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
40811-1	11/30/83		702	920	01/25/84	03/15/88	807,500
178484-2	07/14/87		702	800			

The first 40¢ stamp in the Great Americans Series portrayed Lillian Gilbreth. It was printed on the A Press and, like the 39¢ Clark, went through a change in plate makeup.

Known Gilbreth varieties

- Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper II. L-perforations
- Plate 2: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations

Stamps with floating plate numbers were taken off sale at the PSD on Feb. 29, 1983, but the others were kept on sale until June 30, 1991, when the 40¢ Gilbreth was replaced by the 40¢ Claire Chennault.

40¢ Claire Chennault (with descriptive selvage)

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
195225-1	03/28/90		902	800	05/23/90	07/30/91	211,497
195225-1			902	800	11/30/90		
188543-2	04/30/91		902	800			

The Chennault stamp was said by BEP to have been assigned to the A Press (as the 5¢ Luis Muñoz Marin supposedly was, too), but this was probably an error. When the Muñoz stamp was sent to press, BEP said it was on the C Press. It is probable that the Chennault was also sent to the C Press and we have edited the report to say so.

The Chennault stamp continues on sale at the PSD.

Known Chennault varieties

- Plate 1: Overall tagging. Paper IIIa. Bull's eye perforations. Selvage is untagged
- Plate 2: Prephosphored (dull-gum Lenz) paper. Bull's eye perforations

45¢ Harvey Cushing MD

Plate	Assigned	Canceled	Press	SPR	To Press	Canceled	Impress.
180139-1	05/03/88		702	800		05/24/88	

The 45¢ Dr. Harvey Cushing stamp was printed only on the A Press, using only one plate.

The Cushing stamps, at first, showed block tagging and bull's

BEP did not report when it sent the plate back to press.

The stamp is still on sale, but is probably due for retirement after the Dec. 2, 1992, introduction of the 45¢ Pumpkinseed Sunfish of the Wildlife Series

Known Cushion varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations
Plate 1: Overall tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations

50¢ Chester W. Nimitz

The 50¢ Chester W. Nimitz stamp started out on the I-8 currency press and is still on sale at the PSD. It is the only stamp among those that started on the I-8 press to remain on sale today, although only from a different press.

Nimitz (I-8 Press) (shiny gum)

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
41162-1	01/08/85	110	800	01/18/85	09/25/86	84,773	
41163-2	01/09/85	110	800	01/18/85	09/25/86	84,894	
41164-3	01/10/85	110	800	01/18/85	09/25/86	84,872	
41175-4	01/10/85	110	800	01/18/85	09/25/86	84,872	
41180-5	01/12/85	110	800	NEVER	09/25/86	NONE	
41181-6	01/13/85	110	800	NEVER	09/25/86	NONE	
41182-7	01/14/85	110	800	NEVER	09/25/86	NONE	
41183-8	01/15/85	110	800	NEVER	09/25/86	NONE	
41184-9	01/16/85	110	800	NEVER	09/25/86	NONE	
41185-10	01/17/85	110	800	NEVER	09/25/86	NONE	

Only Plates 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been found by collectors. Stamps printed on the I-8 press were withdrawn from sale Aug. 31, 1987, at the PSD. As on the 8¢ Knox and the 11¢ Partridge, Nimitz stamps printed on the I-8 Press have shiny gum.

Nimitz (A Press) (dull gum)

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
176107-1	02/21/86	702	800	05/28/86	3/25/88	871,700	
179842-2	03/17/88	702					
188704-3	05/17/91	702	800				

Nimitz (C or D Press) (shiny gum)

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
No data							

The January-March issue of *Stamps etc. Catalog* announced a new 50¢ Nimitz on prephosphored paper (Item 050P). It said the stamp was printed in 1992, so it must have been printed on the C or D press.

The stamp (from Plate 3) appears white in daylight and the phosphoring is vertically streaked. It has shiny gum, an easy way to tell it from Plate 3 from the A Press.

Known Nimitz varieties

Shiny gum:

Plates 1, 2, 3, 4: Overall tagging (applied off press by a gravure press). L-perforations

Plate 3: Prephosphored. Bull's eye perforation

Dry gum:

Plates 1 and 2: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforation

Plate 2: Overall tagging (untagged selvage). Bull's eye perforation

Plate 3: Overall tagging (tagged selvage). Paper IIIa. Bull's eye perforation

52¢ Hubert H. Humphrey (with descriptive selvage)

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
188116-1	02/21/91	902	800	02/28/91			

Little printing information has been released on the 52¢ Hubert H. Humphrey stamp. Only Plate 1 has been reported by collectors. The stamp is still in use.

Known Humphrey varieties

Plate 1: Prephosphored (dull-gum Lenz) paper. Electric-eye perforations

56¢ John Harvard

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
176874-1	07/14/86	702	800	08/11/86			

The 56¢ John Harvard stamp is known only on one plate from the A Press. The stamp was sold out at the PSD before Sept. 1, 1991.

Known Harvard varieties

Plate 1: Block tagged. Paper I. Electric-eye perforations

65¢ H.H. "Hap" Arnold

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
181018-1	10/04/88	702	800	10/22/88	04/30/91	582,800	

The 65¢ H.H. "Hap" Arnold stamp was printed only on one plate using the A Press. It is still on sale at the PSD.

Known Arnold varieties

Plate 1: Block tagged. Paper III. Electric-eye perforations

75¢ Wendell L. Willkie (with descriptive selvage)

The original 75¢ Wendell L. Willkie stamp is on dull-gum prephosphored Lenz paper. It is the most recent issue in the series, the only Great Americans stamp issued in 1992. Only Plate 1 has been reported by collectors.

The January-March issue of *Stamps etc. Catalog* listed a "new" Willkie stamp as prephosphored (Item 1075N) even though it is believed the original stamp was prephosphored as well. The new version of the stamp has shiny gum and the phosphoring appears as vertical streaks.

Known Willkie varieties

Plate 1: Prephosphored, dull gum, bull's eye perforation

Plate 1: Prephosphored, shiny gum, bull's eye perforation

\$1 Bernard Revel

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
176992-1	7/18/86	702	800	08/21/86	12/14/89	747,991	
177189-2	8/27/86	702	800	09/06/86	11/06/86	670,991	

The \$1 Bernard Revel stamp was withdrawn from sale at the PSD on Aug. 31, 1989.

In 1987, collectors noticed that the engraver had secretly added a Star of David to the design just to the right of the mustache (as seen on the stamp). The Postal Service decided not to replace the stamp, which had been issued in panes of 100, but also decided not to reprint it. Stocks were depleted in 1989.¹⁸

Another oddity about the Revel stamp is that although two plate numbers were reported printed in fairly large editions, collectors have only found Plate 1. BEP says Plate 2 was destroyed after "experimental" printing.¹⁹

Known Revel varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper II. Electric-eye perforations

\$1 Johns Hopkins

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
182353-1	03/23/89	702	320	04/10/89			

A design had been approved in 1987 for a stamp showing Johns Hopkins, but not until 1989 was it announced that Hopkins would be on a \$1 stamp.

The \$1 Hopkins stamps came in a new format, 20-stamp panes.

The first Hopkins stamps were printed on the A Press with block tagging. Plate 1 was reprinted with overall tagging.

Dennis D. Chamberlain has noted that the Hopkins stamp comes in two shades of blue (grayish and deep blue). But he noted it only on used stamps and it is not yet known what plate represented which shade.

In 1992, production was shifted to the C Press, using Plate 2.²⁰

Known Hopkins varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations (USPS item 1090)

Plate 1: Overall tagging. Paper IIIa. Bull's eye perforations (USPS item N1090)

Plate 2: Prephosphored paper. Bull's eye perforations (USPS item D1090)

\$2 William Jennings Bryan

Plate	Assigned	Certified	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impr.
176084-1	02/18/86	702	800	NEVER	04/10/86	NONE	
176133-2	02/27/86	702	800	03/05/86	12/21/90	625,000	

The \$2 William Jennings Bryan stamp exists only with block tagging and bull's eye perforations. It was withdrawn from sale at the PSD June 30, 1991, and was replaced by the \$2 Bobcat in the Wildlife Series.

Known Bryan varieties

Plate 2: Block tagging. Paper IIIa. Bull's eye perforations

\$5 Bret Harte

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
177101-1	08/06/86		702	800	NEVER	08/07/87	NONE
178359-1	06/24/87		702	320		07/09/87	
189241-2	08/02/91		902	320			

The \$5 Bret Harte stamp was first printed on the A Press and was later moved to the C Press.²¹

The A Press version was withdrawn from sale at the PSD Apr. 30, 1992.

The first A Press Plate 1, printing panes of 100, was canceled in favor of the new 20-stamp pane.

Known Harte varieties

Plate 1: Block tagging. Paper III. Bull's eye perforations

Plate 2: Prephosphored paper. Bull's eye perforations²²

Footnotes

13. Charles Yeager, "Inside Washington," (*United States Specialist*, February 1991).

15. USPS *Philatelic Catalog*, April-May 1982: "The Postal Service adopted a new plate number system effective January 1, 1981. Except in cases where more than four designs appear in a pane of stamps, the new system establishes a plate block as consisting of four stamps regardless of the number of inks or the press used to print the stamps. ...

"The traditional five-digit numbering system used by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to control printing plates and cylinders will be retained for record-keeping purposes. The five-digit numbers will not be printed on stamp selvage after January 1, 1981, except for those issues whose plates went into production before Nov. 1, 1980. Five-digit numbers will be made available to philatelists and publishers for cross-referencing purposes."

16. *Linn's U.S. Stamp Yearbook 1986* tells the story and says it resulted from the introduction of the high-speed, off-press Eureka perforator, making it possible to "eliminate the floating plate numbers so detested by collectors."

17. USPS *Philatelic Catalog*, April-May 1982: "Each color plate or cylinder used initially in the production of a stamp will be designated by the number '1,' and the numbers for each plate or cylinder will be grouped in the selvage adjacent to a single stamp. Whenever a plate or cylinder is replaced during the manufacturing process, the number '1' will give way to the number '2' in the color of the plate or cylinder."

18. *Postal Bulletin*, April 6, 1989, said BEP's stock of Revel stamps had been depleted and urged postmasters to sell two 50¢ stamps instead.

19. Esrati, Stephen G., "Mystery: What happened to Plate 2 of the ill-starred Revels?" (*TPN*, Jan 1993).

20. *Stamp News* (Philatelic Release 92-052).

21. *Stamp News* (Philatelic Release 92-009).

22. *Stamps, etc.*, the sales catalog of the Philatelic Sales Division, insists that this stamp was perforated by the L-perforator. It was not.

Acknowledgments

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Notice

A 12-page brochure, punched for three-ring binder, is available for \$5 from *TPN*. It contains the entire summary from the 1¢ Dix through the \$5 Harte as well as the 20¢ Flag. The brochure is constantly updated as new information is learned.

20¢ Flag went way of 1¢ Dix

The 20¢ Flag sheet stamp is not in the Great Americans Series, but needs to be discussed along with the Great Americans because it went through the same odyssey as the 1¢ Dix.

The first 20¢ Flag stamps were perforated in-line on the A Press, as were the Dix stamps. After attempts to perforate on press were abandoned, the stamp was fed through the L-perforator.

According to Robert E. Kitson¹, all stamps perforated on press have shiny gum, while the stamps perforated on the L-perforator have dull gum.

Kitson also said Plates 39997-2 and 40056-3 were common for the in-line stamps while 40477-4 was common for the L-perforated stamp.²

Plate	Assigned	Cancelled	Press	SPR	To Press	Cancelled	Impress.
39972-1	11/17/81		702	936	NEVER	04/05/82	NONE
39987-2	12/01/81		702	800	12/01/81	12/13/84	10,374,400
40056-3	02/05/82		702	800	02/09/82	03/08/85	8,986,500
40056-3	02/05/82		702	800	04/13/84		
40477-4	JAN 83	01/28/83	702	920*	01/28/83	01/29/85	3,774,000
41132-5	OCT 84	11/08/84	702	920**	NEVER	03/08/85	NONE

*BEP reported at cancellation that Plate 4 had 800 SPR

**BEP reported at cancellation that Plate 5 had 800 SPR

The 800 SPR Flag stamps were sold by the PSD with a warning that the stamps have straight edges and that the plate numbers move "progressively up and down the selvage on a pane-to-pane basis."³

The purported change in plate arrangement on Plate 4 was reflected by a notice in *The Philatelic Catalog* that stamps perforated on the L-perforator were available in four-position stock.⁴ Apparently, BEP had intended to revise the plate arrangement, but never did, as reflected in the change in "subjects" when the plate was canceled.

Neither the *Scott Specialized Catalog of U.S. Stamps* nor the *Durland Standard Plate Number Catalog* has any knowledge of plate blocks of four.

The PSD gave separate ordering numbers for the Flag stamp, depending on perforation. Both versions were withdrawn from PSD sale on Oct. 31, 1985, the same day as the 20¢ Flag coil.

Footnotes

1. Kitson, Robert E., "Perforation Varieties on Recent U.S. Issues." (*U.S. Specialist*, January 1988)

2. Kitson amended his January article in December 1988. Among other things, he corrected these plate numbers.

3. USPS *Philatelic Catalog*, April-May 1983.

4. *Ibid.*, February-March 1984: "Note that Flag sheet stamps perforated on the 'L' perforator are available in four-position stock." That note to the *Philatelic Catalog* continued to run until the stamp was withdrawn, but "four-position stock" was changed to "our position stock."

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**Great Americans
Cover of the Bi-Month**

By Richard L. Beecher

An obscure form—Form 3811-A (“Request for a Return Receipt”)—is used by mailers to:

- request a duplicate return receipt when the original is not returned to the mailer.
- request a return receipt when no such request was made at the time of the original mailing.

There is no fee for the former, but a \$6 charge for the latter.

The stamps on this card received an Aug. 11, 1992, Santa Monica CA hand cancel. The card was then sent to the postmaster of the addressee (in this case, Los Angeles CA 90069). An Aug., 14, 1992,

rubber stamp (in box 4) probably indicates that it was received by that office on that date.

After further research it was established that the original letter was delivered on June 16, 1992 (box 11) and that the signer’s name was deemed illegible (box 10).

The clerk who performed the research then put his

or her initials in box 13.

A Sept. 17, 1992, postmark was applied by the Los Angeles Claims Office and a yellow routing sticker was applied over the addressee’s (“To Postmaster”) address on the reverse side, and the card was finally mailed back to the sender. □

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