

Synopsis: Washington and Franklin Coils

Third Bureau Perforated Issues 1908-1922

Purpose of the Exhibit: The purpose of the exhibit is to show the development of the third Bureau coils highlighting the number of changes in production methods along with uses to domestic and foreign destinations. A great deal of attention has been given to searching for and showing production varieties as well as unusual uses showing common and difficult rates associated with the time period.

Organization: The exhibit is divided into two main sections, flat plate coils and rotary press coils. Within each section major headings identify the issue while minor headings identify the different denominations for the issue shown in the section. Each major section begins with the stamps and the production material for that issue, followed by the different postal uses for each denomination. The uses are organized by denomination and format. Coils were produced in vertical and horizontal format.

What Is Presented: The exhibit is organized in the traditional format. Each major section begins with the set of coil stamps for the issue, followed by production material, and finishes with uses to domestic and foreign destinations. All coil stamps are present for each issue. All but two coil stamps on cover are present in the exhibit.

Certificates: All important items have certificates of expertization, but only the key items have been identified for reference with certificate number and expertizing organization.

Documented and Recorded Items: The key items highlighted in the exhibit have been researched using the following resources. The Philatelic Foundation and APS data base for certificates has been used for reference on covers and some production items. The United States Stamp Society and the Washington and Franklin study group has been another resource for information. A third resource has been collectors and exhibitors of the third Bureau material such as Gerry Nylander, Mick Hadley, George Wagner, and Ed Sissen. The Durland's plate number catalog was used for information on plate numbers. There are several examples in the exhibit discovered and reported by the exhibitor. The last resource, the exhibitor, has been collecting the coil material for 30 years and exhibiting the past 15 years.

The *first major section* shows the five different flat plate coil issues. The first flat plate issue was printed on double line watermarked paper and perforated 12. The second issue was printed on single line watermarked paper and also perforated 12. These first two issues were experimental in nature because the Bureau was looking at new ways to sell stamps to the general public. Vending machines were developed to dispense and sell stamps to the public as a convenience and save the postal service money. They were not very popular with collectors due to the stamps having straight edges and looking the same as the sheet stamps. It was not until the third issue that coils became popular with collectors. This was due to the issue being perforated 8.5 which was different than any other stamps being issued by the Bureau at the time. Coil stamps also became popular with businesses with the invention of affixing machines. These new machines were able to apply the stamps to their mailings at a much faster rate than taking the time to separate and apply sheet stamps. The Bureau continued to make changes and improve coil production. The last two flat plate issues produced by the Bureau involved changes in design and perforations. The most important change made was the perforation gauge. The Bureau settled on gauge 10 perforations which were strong enough, but separated easily when broken from the roll. The Bureau continued to use gauge 10 perforations for quite a few years.

The *second major section* shows the two rotary press coil issues. The development of the rotary press was a significant improvement in the production of coils, it increased production from one million to six million stamps per day. The production process was identical for both rotary press issues. Due to this characteristic the production section for each issue has been combined in this section of the exhibit. The only major difference between the two issues is the first issue was printed on single line watermarked paper. The second issue was printed on unwatermarked paper. This was a cost saving measure by the Bureau to save money during the first World War. The very first rotary press coil to be produced was the two cent Type I horizontal coil. It was produced in perforated, Scott 453, and imperforate format. The imperforate rotary press coil, Scott #459, is included for the sole purpose of comparison. Since both were produced at the same time, they share a distinct shade of color which is only characteristic with the first printing of the stamps. Both examples were released by the Bureau on the same day. The imperforate variety was intended for use by a private vending machine company. There are no known examples on cover for this variety.

What is Not Shown: It does not include any archival material due to two reasons. First, flat plate coils were made from the existing sheet stamps. The purpose of the exhibit is focused on the development of the coil stamps, the production and changes made, and the postal uses. Secondly, the archival material for rotary press issues is not available to the collecting public because it is all contained in the national archives.

Stamp Material: The only mint or unused stamp not shown is the 3 cent single line watermarked perf-12 coil. A used example on piece is shown instead.

Uses on Cover: The only uses not present on cover in solo or mixed franking are the 5 cent Scott 351 vertical coil, the ten cent Scott 356 horizontal coil from the first issue in 1908. All other stamps are present in solo or mixed franking.

Challenge Factor: Each section and issue presents a different challenge, but they all have individual pieces that are difficult to acquire. The perf-12 issues present a tough challenge due to the experimental nature of the issues. When the coils were first sold by the postal service to the general public collectors were unaware they were actually a new issue and something different. They looked just like the sheet stamps being sold but had two straight edges which is an undesirable characteristic of stamps to collectors. A pure commercial use is quite scarce and many examples exist only because stamp dealers used them on their business mailings. In the case of the higher denominations, such as the 4, 5, and 10 cent issues, there are less than 10 documented examples known on cover. The remaining flat plate issues have a number of difficult uses on cover with the higher values being more of a challenge to find on cover.

The rotary press issues also have a number of scarce items as well. In the *watermarked* issue the two cent Type II vertical coil was only in use for 60 days and went unnoticed by collectors until after it had been discontinued by the Bureau. The higher values, the 3, 4, and 5 cent coils, are also tough to locate as well. The 5 cent watermarked issue is rare as a single use to a foreign destination with 12 known. The *second rotary press* issue is a bit easier with the exception of the 2 cent horizontal Type II coil. There are only 17 known uses on cover with just two of them being on post card paying the 2 cent war rate.

The exhibitor has gone to great lengths to locate as many different production examples and variety of uses for each denomination as possible. In many cases the more difficult examples of rates have been included over the more simple examples. There have been numerous pieces acquired by the exhibitor from some of the greatest collectors of Washington and Franklin material. There are pieces in the exhibit from Mick Hadley, George Wagner, Ed Sisken, Gerry Farrelly, Gerry Nylander, and Wallace Cleland.

Exhibit Highlights:

- 1) A Double repair splice on a 2 cent horizontal, Scott 353, DL watermark strip of four, unique item.
- 2) A "reverse paste-up" of a 1 cent, Scott 352, horizontal coil, DL watermark on post card, only documented use.
- 3) A 1 cent, Scott 352, mint plate number pair, reverse paste-up, with tab on left and plate # 4975, only documented example with plate number.
- 4) Wrapper with singles of Scott 354 & 355, 4 and 5 cent horizontal coils, DL watermark, Bell & Company.
- 5) A 2 cent perf-12, Scott 388, horizontal coil on cover, 1 of 6 documented uses.
- 6) A 3 cent perf-12, **Scott 389, Orangeburg coil**, on cover.
- 7) A 3 cent, Scott 394, perf-8,5 coil on a Bell & Company clasp envelope to Canada, 4th class treaty rate.
- 8) A 4 cent, Scott 395, perf-8.5 registered cover with a strip of 3 from the provisional coil plates. One of two documented uses on cover.
- 9) A 5 cent, Scott 447, perf-10 horizontal coil on cover to Brazil. One of two documented uses, only solo use.
- 10) The EDU use of the 5 cent, Scott 447, perf-10 coil pair on registered cover. Two of two documented uses.
- 11) The EDU of any rotary press coil, a 2 cent, Scott 453, Type I single line watermarked horizontal coil.
- 12) A 2 cent, Scott 449, vertical rotary press Type II SL watermarked coil on post card paying the first class letter rate for an attachment.
- 13) A supplementary mail use, two strips of five of the 1 cent unwatermarked horizontal coil, Scott 490, paying the UPU rate plus the supplementary fee.
- 14) A single 2 cent, Scott 491, horizontal rotary press Type II unwatermarked coil on post card paying the war rate, 1 of 2 documented uses on post card.
- 15) A solo use of the 10 cent, Scott 497, rotary press coil paying five times the first class rate.

New Changes & Additions: There have been a number of significant pieces added to the exhibit since it was last shown in New York 2016. A number of these are unique items. The most recent additions made this year, 2018, come from a long time collector who spent 65 years assembling his collection of Washington and Franklin coil issues. **The newest additions are highlighted in bold**

Production Pieces:

- 1) A 1 cent vertical pair, Scott 348, with post printing paper folds.
- 2) A 1 cent vertical strip of 4 with repair splice, Scott 348, unique discovery.
- 3) A 1 cent plate number pair, #4975 with tab on left, Scott 352. This is the only documented reverse paste-up example with tab on the left and a plate number.
- 4) A 1 cent, Scott 352, on post card with reverse paste-up. Only documented use of a paste-up on cover or card.
- 5) A 2 cent, Scott 353, strip of four with two repair splices. Unique item.
- 7) A 2 cent, Scott 386, vertical guide line strip of four with pre-printing paper fold.

Coil Stamps:

- 1) A used 3 cent horizontal single, Scott 389, on small piece. Known as the “Orangeburg Coil”, this completes the exhibit with at least a single or pair of every coil issue.

Postal Uses:

- 1) A 3 cent horizontal coil, Scott 389, Orangeburg Coil, on a clasp envelope, fourth class samples.
- 2) **A registered cover with two strips of 5 of the 1 cent horizontal coil, Scott 412. Largest franking known.**
- 3) **A registered cover to Canada, treaty rate, of the 3 cent horizontal coil, Scott 445. One of 7 documented covers.**
- 4) A 5 cent horizontal single, Scott 447, on cover paying the UPU rate to Brazil. This is one of the rarest solo uses of any flat plate coil and just the second documented example on cover in time period. It is a new discovery, and the only example to a foreign destination.
- 5) A 2 cent horizontal single, Scott 453, to Portugal. It was double weight and short paid six cents. It was assessed 12 cents postage due and returned to sender. It also has several official seals.
- 6) **A registered cover with a strip of four, of the 3 cent horizontal coil, Scott 456. This is the EDU and only documented example on cover.**
- 7) **A solo use of the 4 cent horizontal coil, Scott 457.**
- 8) A supplementary use, two strips of 5 of the unwatermarked horizontal coil, Scott 490, paying the UPU rate.
- 9) A 2 cent horizontal single, Scott 491, Type II, advertising cover.
- 10) A first and fourth class mixed franking of two 2 cent horizontal singles, Scott 492, on a domestic use.
- 11) Three 2 cent horizontal coils, Scott 492, paying postage due on an incoming cover from India.
- 12) A 5 cent horizontal strip of four, Scott 496, on a tag paying the fourth class rate for a chemical sample.
- 13) A mixed franking of the last 3rd Bureau coil, 10 cent Scott 497, and the first 4th Bureau coil produced, the 2 cent horizontal coil.

There have been a large number of additions recently made to the exhibit, the key item on cover being the Scott 389, or known as the Orangeburg Coil. This is not the norm because it is difficult to find new material or pieces that improve what is already in the exhibit. In this case many of them came from a past exhibitor who had a very comprehensive exhibit of this material. Many of these pieces took quite a few years to find and assemble. Without his help it would have taken a lot longer to improve the exhibit. These pieces make a significant improvement to the strength of the exhibit. The 447 solo use was an item he recently found after 35 plus years of searching. Five of the new production pieces were also from his exhibit. The reverse paste-up pair with plate number and the rotary press mill splice were discovered by this exhibitor.

A new ending for the exhibit has been added, a cover with a mixed franking of a 3rd and 4th Bureau coil on a 2 cent circular die envelope. With the election of Warren G. Harding the third Bureau issues ended and the new fourth Bureau issues were released over a transitional period of time.