

The background is a dark blue collage of various vintage letters and stamps. The letters are in various orientations and colors, some with red wax seals and others with blue or green ink. The stamps are mostly circular and rectangular, featuring portraits of historical figures and various designs. The overall aesthetic is that of a classic philatelic collection.

UNITED STATES CLASSIC PHILATELY

Presented to the Royal Philatelic Society, London
by the United States Philatelic Classics Society

May 18th, 2023

Introduction

The opportunity for members of the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society to present their material to the Royal Philatelic Society London represents one of the most significant and exciting assemblages of 19th Century United States philately in recent memory. While by no means comprehensive, the participants represent many of the major milestones in the American post from the Colonial era through the turn of the 20th Century.

More important than the stamps and covers, however, are the collectors themselves. Several participants have won the Champion of Champions award, while others are exhibiting for the very first time. That diversity is important as it demonstrates the power that an event such as this has in drawing together collectors of all experience levels.

My team and I are very proud to have been able to play a role in the organization of this event. We'd like to thank Carol Bommarito for her wonderful vision and planning, USPCS President David D'Alessandris, and all of the participants who generously donated their time and material to make this happen.

Charles Epting
President and CEO of H.R. Harmer

May, 2023
New York, New York

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---------|
| A Postal History Map of The United States of America by Chip Gliedman..... | Page 1 |
| Colonial Mail by Tim O'Connor..... | Page 2 |
| Free Franks by Dan Ryterband..... | Page 3 |
| Baltimore and Providence Provisionals by James Grimwood Taylor..... | Page 3 |
| The New York Provisional by Mark Schwartz..... | Page 4 |
| Blood's Local Post by Dr. Vern Morris..... | Page 5 |
| The 1847 Issue by Gordon Eubanks..... | Page 6 |
| The 1851 3c Imperforate Issue by Charles Temple..... | Page 7 |
| The 1851-1869 Issues by Mike Farrell..... | Page 7 |
| The 1869 Issue by Steven Walske..... | Page 8 |
| Large Bank Notes by Matt Kewriga..... | Page 9 |
| Small Bank Notes by Labron Harris..... | Page 9 |
| The 2c Columbian Issue by Tom Corette..... | Page 10 |
| The Columbian Issues by Mike Farrell..... | Page 10 |
| The 2c Columbian Issue by David Mayo..... | Page 11 |
| The Trans-Mississippi Issue by Mike Farrell..... | Page 11 |
| Hawaiian Postal History by Fred Gregory..... | Page 12 |

A POSTAL HISTORY MAP OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

by Chip Gliedman

There is perhaps no better introduction to United States postal history than Chip Gliedman's map. The premise is simple: one cover from each of the 50 states. Its execution is much more complicated: how can someone tell the story of New York, for example, with just one cover?

That challenge is also what makes this exhibit so much fun for Gliedman, who explains that he is "always trying to find new items that will be more interesting than what is already there." The covers run the gamut in terms of age and subject matter: 1822 election returns from the Choctaw Agency (Mississippi), an 1870 campaign cover promoting Ulysses S. Grant (Iowa), a 1937 crash cover from the Hindenburg (New Jersey).

The scattershot nature of the covers is the entire point: Gliedman wants to create an exhibit that will connect with people no matter where they are from or what they collect. "I want to spark a conversation about what people would include for each state," he explains. When asked which state is the most difficult for him, he has no hesitation in his answer: Idaho. He also finds it difficult to balance out the display so that no one facet of postal history is over-represented. But ultimately,

Gliedman feels this is an exhibit that has one goal: to provide the viewer with fun.

The unconventional approach of Chip Gliedman's postal history map provides the perfect springboard for the rest of this display, which will trace the history of the post office in America in a (more or less) chronological manner.



COLONIAL MAIL

by Tim O'Connor



The story of United States postal history begins over 200 years before the first postage stamps were even issued. Nearly as soon as Europeans settled in North America they required a postal service. The complex rates and routes, combined with the various currencies in use at the time, make the study of the colonial era of postal history a particularly rewarding challenge. One can trace the birth and growth of the United States through the mail that has survived to this day.

Tim O'Connor began, like many, as a traditional stamp collector, but his love of history (and particularly the American Revolution) quickly led him to start collecting stampless covers from the era. When he first began there was a limited amount of material on the market, but as universities and historical societies began to deaccession their holdings the market became much more active. When asked about his favorite material O'Connor is quick to bring up the fact that he is a Ben Franklin interpreter in addition to a philatelist, but only "Ben the postmaster—not the politician or the lawyer—the postmaster."

There is an irony to O'Connor bringing his material to London, seeing as much of it was sent while America was still subject to British rule. He (somewhat facetiously) hopes that British collectors might be able to correct him on some of the rates and routes in his exhibit. The fact that O'Connor has been able to learn as much as he has is remarkable, since piecing together the history of mail sent 250 years ago can be nearly impossible. After all, "these are the oldest covers in all of North America," he succinctly explains.



FREE FRANKS

by Dan Ryterband



The term “free frank” refers to a piece of mail sent without postage as a privilege for political or military leaders. This custom dates back to Great Britain in the middle of the 17th Century for Members of Parliament; in America, franking privileges have been extended to presidents, first ladies, members of congress, and the Commanding General of the Army (among others).

Daniel Ryterband’s collection reads like a “who’s who” of early American history: George and Martha Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Davy Crockett. Ryterband was offered his first Washington free frank as

he was transitioning from a traditional stamp collector into a postal historian, and immediately the seeds were planted for this new pursuit. “I think the collection speaks for itself,” he explains, “when you realize who the signers were and the stories that accompany the franks.”

BALTIMORE & PROVIDENCE PROVISIONALS

by James Grimwood Taylor



United States postage rates were greatly simplified through an act of Congress effective July 1, 1845. From that day forward, letters weighing under one-half ounce would be charged for any distance under 300 miles, 5 cents; and for any distance over 300 miles, 10 cents. Calculating postage rates was now much simpler, and as such a number of postmasters endeavored to produce adhesive stamps to facilitate prepayment of postage in their own offices. These stamps are known today as “Postmasters’ Provisionals”.

James Grimwood-Taylor has in his collection stamps produced for Baltimore, Maryland, New York and Providence, Rhode Island. As a British collector of American material, he muses, “You guys had so much more fun than we did. You had all these little guys producing their stamps, and I love the idea of a postmaster being able to pick his own design.”

THE NEW YORK PROVISIONAL

by Mark Schwartz

Of the 11 municipalities that issued Postmasters' Provisionals between the years 1845 and 1847, those from New York City rank first in terms of quality and prevalence. Produced by the same firm that engraved and printed the first United States federal stamps two years later, the New York Provisional is a small masterpiece of artistry and design. Over 140,000 were printed by the time the stamps were phased out in 1847, a number far exceeding any other provisional. As a means of preventing theft, shortly after they began being sold, each stamp was to be signed by an employee of the post office when sold. Differences in these signatures, combined with paper varieties and 40 different plate positions, make for an eminently collectible issue.

Mark Schwartz has been piecing together his exhibit for the better part of the last decade, after deciding he wanted to attempt a traditional stamp exhibit. Inspired by collectors such as Gordon Eubanks, Jim Allen, and others, he



settled on the New York Provisional as a deserving subject. Reflecting on its high-quality engraving and larger-than-usual size, Schwartz repeatedly affirms one of his main reasons for selecting it: "It's a gorgeous stamp."

But the New York Provisional is much more than just a gorgeous stamp. "This was the first stamp that was sent to almost every state in the country, as well as foreign countries," Schwartz goes on to explain. "It helped prepare the way for people when the 1847 Issue came out." The life of the New York Provisional may have been fleeting, but its production and use would forever change the way Americans sent mail.

BLOOD'S LOCAL POST

by Dr. Vern Morris

The post office was far from the only entity to issue postage stamps in the United States. In fact, the first stamps produced in the Western Hemisphere were made by a private company. These local post offices operated in competition (and sometimes conjunction) with the post office for much of the 19th Century, delivering mail to and from the post office at a time when such service was not yet widespread. Local posts were generally less expensive and more reliable than the post office, providing a threat to the government's postal monopoly.

Vernon Morris details this battle between the federal government and private enterprise through the history of Blood & Co., a Philadelphia-based local post. "It's private enterprise at its finest," Morris explains. "They were fighting the Fed. These local companies were up against



the United States Post Office and they ran circles around them." When the government realized they couldn't compete with an operation such as Blood's they simply made the existence of such a company illegal.

Morris, like many, began as a traditional stamp collector before taking a closer look at postal history. Local posts were especially interesting to him, both due to the economic history behind them and the wealth of available material. Perhaps the most notable adhesive stamp issued by Blood & Co. is the famed "Striding Messenger", which was the first pictorial stamp ever printed. Morris has the only example of this iconic stamp used alongside the United States 1847 5 cent issue, a world-class rarity that he points to as a particular favorite.

THE 1847 ISSUE

by Gordon Eubanks



The United States 1847 Issue has fascinated collectors for over 175 years. Consisting of an unassuming 5c Red Brown stamp and 10c Black stamp with the portraits of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington, respectively, these were the first federally-issued United States postage stamps. Although their use was not mandated, nor was it particularly widespread, they nevertheless represent the seed from which all later American stamp issues grew and as such it is difficult to overstate their importance.

The Gordon Eubanks exhibit of the 1847 Issue adopts a traditional approach, beginning with the design and production of the stamps and continuing through their use and eventual demonetization. Although collecting habits are cyclical, interest in the 1847 Issue is often high and as such Eubanks has faced stiff competition in acquiring some of the key items for his collection. He also relishes the challenge that the issue provides given that adhesive postage stamps were far from ubiquitous at the time they were issued, explaining that “the use of stamps took a while to adopt, so the usage of the first issue was relatively small compared to the next two issues.”

When reflecting on his collection, Eubanks feels that “people need to appreciate how different communication was 150 years ago.” He continues, “To pay 10 cents to send a letter over 300 miles—that was a lot of money for a half-ounce letter. Not everyone could afford that.” While the post office (and even postage stamps) existed before the 1847 Issue, there is no denying the significance of the issue when viewing the collection Eubanks has been able to assemble. These two humble stamps marked the beginning of a new era of American history.



THE 1851 3 CENT IMPERFORATE ISSUE

by Charles Temple



The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society evolved from the Three Cent 1851-57 Unit of the American Philatelic Society, and there are few stamps the world over that have been subjected to such rigorous study. The 3c issue of 1851 would have been the first adhesive postage stamp many Americans encountered, coming into use at a critical time in the nation's history. The sizable number of plates used to produce the stamp, combined with color varieties, makes it an ideal issue for specialization.

Charles Temple, a forensic engineer by trade, was naturally drawn to such a challenge. "The whole 3 cent issue, the 13 plates, is an enormous jigsaw puzzle to put together," he describes. "That's what I like about it. If I find a stamp on its own, an off-cover stamp, I can plate it and figure out what position it's from, identify the color, and can tell what year it's from even if it's not dated. My investigitive nature spills over into my hobby. Each cover, each stamp, is another puzzle for me to solve."

Temple hopes that people who view his material will understand the depth and complexity of the issue, and how production challenges resulted in the varieties that collectors prize today. Demand for postage stamps skyrocketed over the course of the 1850s, the printers were caught off guard, and stamp production was very much being pioneered in real time. Temple's meticulous study helps to tell the story of that important juncture in American society.

THE 1851-1869 ISSUES

by Mike Farrell

Between 1851 and 1869, the use of postage stamps in the United States skyrocketed. Beginning in 1855 the post office required that mail be prepaid with adhesives, rather than being paid in cash or sent collect. For the first time, every American was using stamps on each piece of mail they sent. Other developments came in rapid succession: in 1857 the federal government began perforating stamps, in 1861 the onset of the Civil War necessitated the creation of an entirely new set of designs, and in 1867 the government began producing stamps with "grills," or small impressions in the surface of a stamp that were intended to break the paper's fibers and prevent reuse. The collection of Mike Farrell captures many of these milestones in the development of the American postal system with beautiful and eye-catching covers.



THE 1869 ISSUE

by Steven Walske

Prior to 1869, all United States stamps bore a portrait of one of five men: Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, or Abraham Lincoln. All of that changed in 1869 with the issuance of the “Pictorial Issue”. Ranging from 1c to 90c, the obligatory portraits of Franklin and Washington were included, but so too were designs depicting a post rider on horseback, a locomotive, and a steamship (among others). Public outcry against these unconventional stamps was swift, and after only about 13 months they were replaced by a more traditional series.



Steve Walske specifically focuses on the ways in which the 1869 Pictorial Issue was used on mail to France. On December 31, 1869, the postal treaty between the United States and France expired, meaning that the next four years were filled with interesting and complex postal history. The combination of the short lifespan of the stamps and the lack of a postal treaty makes this exhibit particularly significant.

Growing up, Walske and his father, Carl, would go to the New England Stamp Company together to purchase covers. After living in France for two years he became something of a Francophile and as such his specific interest was born. Finding high denomination stamps on cover has proven especially challenging, although now Walske has examples of every known stamp (the 90 cent doesn't exist on a cover to France).



As far as his favorite item, Walske points to a cover from New Mexico (where he was born) to France paying 13-times the letter rate. Ultimately, he hopes the biggest takeaway will be that it is “a very pretty exhibit”. Given the beauty of the 1869 Pictorial Issue and the covers Walske has been able to gather together, it is impossible to argue with that assessment.

LARGE BANK NOTES

by Matthew Kewriga

Issued to replace the unpopular 1869 Pictorial Issue, the Large Bank Note stamps were hastily put into service in 1870. Between different printing companies, paper types, colors, grills, and even “secret” marks incorporated into the design, these stamps present a daunting challenge to even the most advanced collectors. Their use coincided with the birth of the Universal Postal Union in 1875, and as such they are found on mail to all corners of the globe. It is an issue with endless avenues of study and exploration.



Between the years 1870 and 1888, the Large Bank Note stamps were variously produced by the National Bank Note Company, the Continental Bank Note Company, and the American Bank Note Company. New subjects came in the form of Edwin Stanton (on the 7 cent), Henry Clay (on the 12 cent), Daniel Webster (on the 15 cent), Winfield Scott (on the 24 cent), Alexander Hamilton (on the 30 cent), and Oliver Hazard Perry (on the 90 cent), none of whom had ever been depicted on postage stamps before.

Although his strongest emphasis is on the 2 cent Vermilion Bank Note stamp depicting Andrew Jackson, Matthew Kewriga also has an extensive collection including mixed frankings with stamps of other nations and high denominations (such as the 90 cent Perry) on cover. This era of postal history sets the stage for America’s emergence as a world power at the turn of the 20th Century.



SMALL BANK NOTES

by Labron Harris

The successors to the Large Bank Notes were the aptly-named Small Bank Notes, produced by the American Bank Note Company beginning in 1890. Although smaller in size than any prior definitive stamps (a cost cutting measure by the post office), they carried on many of the same subjects and colors as the stamps that preceded them. The Small Bank Note Issue would see fairly limited use as the Bureau of Engraving and Printing assumed production of postage stamps in 1894.

Labron Harris, known to most as a postal history dealer, also has a sizable personal collection of the Small Bank Note Issue. He thinks this is a period of postal history that deserves more attention, as both the United States and the world were in states of flux. As the nation’s westward expansion escalated and the Universal Postal Union spread to most, but not all, parts of the globe, collectors were left with some wonderful covers including territorial uses and mixed frankings. Harris is especially proud of the earliest recorded use of the 10 cent stamp (on a registered cover from Mobile, Alabama) and a strip of three of the same stamp used as postage due on an incoming cover from Germany.

THE 2 CENT COLUMBIAN ISSUE

by Tom Corette



Prepared for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, the Columbian Issue marks the United States's first foray into commemorative postage stamps. With 16 denominations ranging from 1 cent to 5 dollars, the entire set of stamps would have cost a collector \$16.34 at a time when many families were living on about \$30 a month. Predictably, backlash from the general public was swift and many of the higher denominations saw incredibly limited use.

The 2 cent Columbian Issue, which depicts Christopher Columbus coming ashore at San Salvador, was another matter. As 2 cents paid the first class letter rate at the time, over 1.4 billion were printed and the stamp was ubiquitous around the time of the Columbian Exposition. This large production number makes the 2 cent value in particular very popular amongst collectors.

Tom Corette has collected the 2 cent Columbian Issue for the past 54 years, settling on the issue because there was a wide variety of material available (including innumerable plate varieties). His collection today includes the earliest known use of this stamp, as well as a variety of errors, freaks, and oddities.



THE COLUMBIAN ISSUE

by Mike Farrell



While the 2 cent Columbian certainly saw the most widespread use, the other values in the series present postal historians with a myriad of avenues to explore. From registered mail, foreign destinations, special delivery, and more, the 16 denominations produced for the Columbian Exposition can be combined in countless interesting ways. The dollar values (\$1 through \$5) were not issued for a specific postal purpose, and instead were mostly used by philatelists looking to create souvenirs for themselves. Mike Farrell's collection of the Columbian Issue traces the development, production, and use of each value, which is no small task for what was up to that point the largest series of stamps ever produced by the United States.



THE 2 CENT COLUMBIAN ISSUE

by David Mayo

David Mayo also specializes in the 2 cent Columbian Issue—in fact, he jokingly refers to Tom Corrette as the biggest hurdle to acquiring rare material. Childhood participation in a local stamp club introduced Mayo to exhibiting, and now he is committed to telling the story of one of America’s workhorse stamps.

“I think it shows the depth that a single stamp can be studied at,” he explains when asked about his decision to focus on the 2 cent Columbian. The fact that very nearly every single collector has an example of this stamp in their collection also means that people looking at the exhibit can find something relatable. In particular, Mayo is drawn to the essays prepared in advance of the issue, as well as auxiliary markings showing complicated handling of mail, that has been returned to sender.



In 1894 the Bureau of Engraving and Printing began printing United States postage stamps, and their definitive issues quickly phased out the Columbian Issue. While the lifespan of the 2c Columbian issue may have been brief, the stamp remains one of the most popular stamps ever produced by countless collectors.

THE TRANS-MISSISSIPPI ISSUE

by Mike Farrell

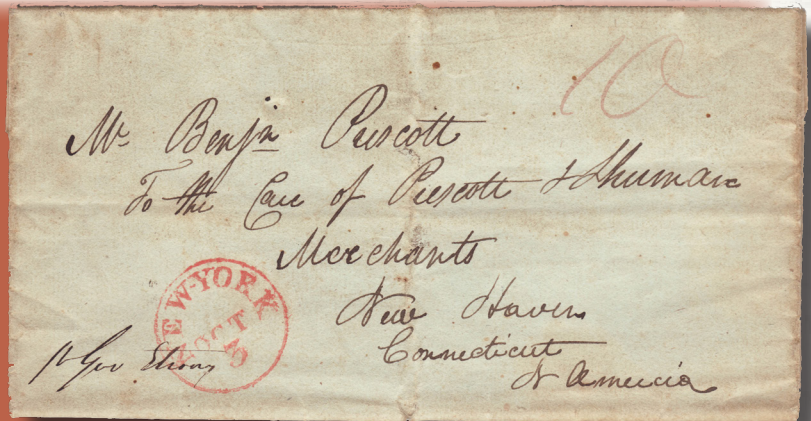
Not long after the release of the Columbian Issue, the Post Office Department set out to produce their first bicolored commemorative stamps. This time with only nine denominations ranging from 1 cent to \$2, the Trans-Mississippi Issue was intended to celebrate the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska in 1898. The onset of the Spanish-American War meant that the two-colored designs never made it past the proof stage, and it was determined at the last minute that the series would be produced in solid colors. The lack of stamps above the \$2 denomination suggests that the post office had listened to the criticism of the Columbian Issue to some extent, although the higher values still saw extremely limited use.



HAWAIIAN POSTAL HISTORY

by Fred Gregory

The postal history of Hawaii is at once wholly unique and yet intrinsically linked to the development of the United States. Geographical isolation and limited resources resulted in some of the greatest philatelic rarities. Misinformation and half-truths have pervaded the literature for over a century. For a group of islands so small, Hawaiian postal history presents a massive challenge to the dedicated collector.



Fortunately future generations of collectors will be able to benefit from the scholarship of Fred Gregory, Hawaii's foremost postal historian. From his three-volume tome on Hawaii Foreign Mail to 1870 to his equally-valuable website, Gregory's research has helped bring to light new and accurate information regarding Hawaii postal history.

Gregory began collecting stamps in childhood, even going as far as starting a stamp store near his home as a way to sell stamps to his friends. A weeklong trip to Hawaii combined with an article in Forbes about investing in postage stamps were the sparks for what would become his life's work. "It's important to learn about the way people communicated," he explains, "especially business people living in Hawaii having to communicate with people on the East Coast of the United States" (a distance of 5,000 miles, as the crow flies).

When asked about the highlights of his collection, Gregory responds in a manner every collector can relate to: "They're all my favorite covers." He does, however, point to an early letter sent from Hawaii in 1816 and the famed "Hawaiian Missionary" stamps as items of particular merit. You can explore Gregory's collection and research more at his website www.hawaiianstamps.com



About the United States Philatelic Classic Society

The U.S. Philatelic Classics Society is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 dedicated to the study of the stamps and postal history of the United States through the turn of the 20th Century. Our goal is to promote interest and knowledge of philately through the encouragement of philatelic research and the exchange of information among our members as well with other philatelic organizations.



The USPCS is the successor of The Three Cent 1851-57 Unit of the American Philatelic Society. It was originally founded by a group of specialists in the United States 1851 and 1857 Issues that included Dr. Carroll Chase, Stanley B. Ashbrook, and Leo J. Shaughnessy. Since its founding, the Society has broadened its scope to include postal issues and postal history from the stampless era up to Columbian and First Bureau issues.

The Society provides many resources to the philatelic community including publishing and distributing The Chronicle of the U.S. Classic Postal Issues and the Chairman's Chatter. Our robust website includes a database of back issues of The Chronicle, exhibits from our members, census data on a variety of subjects, an electronic library, and much more. Members meet twice a year: once at the Great American Stamp Show and again at rotating shows throughout the country.

**Interested In Joining The Society?
Apply on our website at www.USPCS.org**

**Special thanks to H.R. Harmer for their
generous support of this exhibition.**

