

# Hinges & Tongs

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Some of you know that I enjoy exhibiting Civil War era documents as part of a fiscal history study, so I entered earlier this year just to see how my exhibit would be judged. With the loss of ROPEX, I have been exhibiting at the WSP show in Cleveland every March. One thing I have learned over the years is that an exhibit is never done. There is always a piece or two that can be added to improve the exhibit along with making changes based on a judge's comments.

I did better than I thought I would. I received a Large Gold with a score of 92 out of 100. There were only 7 exhibits in the open competition that scored higher if my count is correct. A total of 6 judges, 2 teams of 3, had to agree with the score.

I would recommend making the journey if the GASS is in our neck of the woods. I believe next year's is in Hartford CT which is not that far away.



## By John Lighthouse

Rarely does a show of this caliber come to our neighborhood. In mid-August, the Great American Stamps Show (GASS) was held in Cleveland, just a a four-hour drive from Rochester. My wife, my daughter, and I made the short trek to attend 3 days of the national event and then did some sight-seeing, like the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame the 4<sup>th</sup> day.

Before you enter GASS, you are given a badge which allows you to go on the floor and a book detailing all the dealers and exhibits and where they are located. With over 1000 exhibit frames and more than 75 dealers, the guidebook saves a lot of time as you can go right to the booths or frames you wish to see.. If you pre-register, the badge is printed up professionally.

The APS puts on quite a show. When you first walk in, you are hit with the immensity of the room, the number of dealers and the exhibits which seem to go on forever in well-organized rows. The Court of Honor included the inverted Jenny which I am sure some of you have seen in person. It was certainly a great treat for us. There were a few other exhibits in the Court of Honor that were very special. The exhibits included the Champion of Champions competition with some amazing exhibits.



## President's Message

What a great summer this has been! We all have complaints about the weather, but after seeing what has been happening in other parts of the country, I feel we have been fortunate.

The RPA starts its second year at Unity Village community room. The room is quite spacious, and is a great meeting venue with its built-in audio-video system. As always, we are looking for people to present programs. Elections are coming up. So think about running for office and help guide the RPA forward.

One of the items to come out of the survey that Tom Fortunato conducted last spring was a desire to have a stamp show in Rochester. In order for this to become a reality, we need members to help plan and organize the show.

*Jack Rosenstein*



Unity-Village Community Center in Greece

## RPA Meeting News

It's time to get the club back together in 2023!

Come on out and join us again as we start a new semester before closing out the year. The first Thursday meeting will be more a "welcome back," without a formal presentation, but it's a good time for everyone to bring in and talk about their best philatelic find from the past few months. So do so! That includes not only those of you who will attend in person but by Zoom as well.

If you can't attend in person, join us via a Zoom connection using the following link and login details at 7:30 PM each meeting night:

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/7117955142?pwd=amR3Z1Z3L0d4bkJaNHdJUjBmbjFaQT09>,

Meeting ID: 711 795 5142, Passcode: 9W3Mkg

Note that Zoom connections last 30 minutes. On disconnection, click the meeting link again to rejoin the meeting in progress.

## Upcoming RPA meetings

The Unity Village Community Center is at 1477 Long Pond Road in Greece. Buy/sell/trade runs from 7:00-7:30 PM, followed by the formal meeting at 7:30 PM. A silent auction concludes most evening's program.

Here's our schedule through December. You will notice that four of our fall meetings lack programs. Let us know what you would like to talk about during our six upcoming Thursday night meetings.

**Sept. 14.....** Welcome Back, What's New?

**Sept. 28.....** Withdrawn Stamps of the 21st Century  
*by Tom Fortunato*

**Oct 12.....** TBA

**Oct 26.....** TBA

**Nov 9.....** TBA

**Dec 21.....** TBA, *note: a week later than usual*

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For the last few years, I have helped to judge articles published in the various rock club newsletters in the Eastern Federation of Mineral and Lapidary Society. They send them to me by Priority Mail and include a postage paid envelope inside for me to return them in once I had read them and ranked them. Imagine my surprise this year to find the return envelope looking like this! Nothing, but Forever stamps plastered everywhere! I did not bother to count them and the postal clerk when I went to mail the parcel did not either!

# Fish Tail Cancellation, Washington D. C. by Larry Rausch

Rear Admiral **Raymond Perry Rodgers** (1849-1925) was an officer in the U.S. Navy. He served as the head officer of the Office of Naval Intelligence and as President of the Naval War College. He entered the US Naval Academy in 1864 and graduated in 1868. At the time this cover was postmarked in 1883 he was a lowly Lieutenant serving on the USS Tennessee from 1882 to 1884.



The cover is postmarked with a very special Washington, DC postmark referred to as Fish Tail cancellation. Shown below are the four cancellations which make up this series "one to four". Look closely at the numbers inside the oval portion of the duplex cancellation. The ends of the numbers take the shape of a fish's tail. These Washington, DC cancellations are the only US cancellations taking on these fancy markings and are fairly scarce given they were only used for 5 years and just in Washington D. C.

This cover caught my attention because of the fancy cancellation. It is known as a Fish Tail postmark and it was used for only a handful of years in Washington D.C. (1882-1887). An added attribute of this cover is that a prominent American is the addressee.



## Beware – Used Numerical Grading Frauds by Tom Fortunato

I've been following an interesting thread on the StampBoards web site for some time, and encourage you to check it out <https://stampboards.com/viewtopic.php?t=208&start=2800>. It's a popular thread titled, "Numerical Stamp Grading - will it ever occur outside the USA?," that started in April, 2007, having 2,843 posts as of mid-July 2023.

In a nutshell, some collectors are willing to spend big money to obtain the best possible example of a stamp, even very common ones. Hence the firm "Professional Stamp Experts" found its niche by offering a grading service that would numerically score the centering perfection of a stamp on a 100 point scale. A top graded stamp of course would command a premium price in the market, with mint hinged, mint never hinged and used (in that order) bringing wilder prices. Yes, used "perfection" is top-valued!

Take a really good look at the two stamps at the bottom of this page. Yes, they are the exact same stamp. The unique perforations on any stamp will act as fingerprints. The first image was submitted as a

MNH example in August, 2013; the second submitted as a used example in November, 2018.

An astute collector did some research going through PSE certificates online and found a troubling trend of mint submissions receiving high grades being resubmitted at a later time magically turned into used examples. He reported this info back to PSE in 2020 when at least 20 fakes were uncovered. More have been found since.

While the catalog value is only 25 cents for many common stamps, some nuts are willing to pay very big bucks for highly graded used stamps, even several times that if it was mint. This is why some folks place fake cancels on highly graded mint stamps to sell them for much higher prices. The mint stamp graded 98 out of 100 might fetch \$100 or more by collectors seeking the "perfect" copy, but the same stamp in used condition may sell for \$500 or more. Used "perfect" stamps are many times less numerous than mint examples.

Specifics have only been released on the StampBoards site in the past few months. Details about two submitters of these were turned over to the APS, but both are not members. Why hasn't this been reported broadly in the philatelic media? Buyer beware!





## One of a Kind?

by Robert Lighthouse

As many of you know I have a particular liking to the Canadian map stamps (Scott #85-86 issued in 1898). I have studied the individual prints for variations and irregularities in the colony sizes and colors that can be used to place the stamps in their precise location on one of the five plates used to produce sheets of 100 stamps. You can see my exhibit on this on the RPA webpage: <http://www.rpastamps.org/presentations/canada1898/index.html>

But this story is not about the stamp itself, but rather a unique cancellation on a single Canadian map stamp.. Although the full name of the town has been truncated the final six letters are evident, RATHEN". I have a volume listing every Canadian postal strike every produced and there is only one entry with that ending. Linrathen, Manitoba. is an extinct small town named after a village in Scotland. It is (or should I say was) located approximately 30 miles southwest of Winnipeg.

The town existed from 1884-1920 and the postal service there used a split ring cancelling device from 1884-1908. According to the Canadian Postal Archives a post office was established 06/01/1881. The only reference to a postmaster was a L.H. Sharp who posted a bond to open a new post office in Oct 1890. A year ago I posted this stamp on the Canadian Map Stamp Study Group website for members to peruse their used copies {probably in the 10's of thousands} for used copies struck with any cancelling device for this location on map stamp singles or covers etc. There has been no response yet. The head of the Canadian postal history society is of the opinion that it is probably unique. All that is left of the town is a small historic marker.



by Larry Rausch

A very short 5 year post office life span makes this Durlandville cover a jewel to find. DeWitt C Durland served as the only postmaster of Durlandville. The town is located in Orange County, 5 miles southwest of Goshen, the county seat. During its short existence as a post office, it went through three names. Founded in January 1880 as **County Farm** its name changed to **Durlandville** in August 1882 and finally to **Orange Farm** in September 1887. The post office was discontinued on February 10, 1889. An internet search produced very little information about these three towns.



Additionally, this addressee, Matthews, is a well popular family name here, and may be from a family of important people. The family patriarch Vincent Mat(t)hews purchased property in 1821 naming the estate **Mathewsfeld**. He was the father to **David Ma(t)hews**, a Loyalist and Mayor of New York City during the American Revolutionary War. An additional son **Fletcher Mat(t)hews** was also a Loyalist. Both were alleged in schemes against the newly forming republic. David was accused of supporting a plan to kill Revolutionary General **George Washington** and he was sentenced to death but escaped to live in Nova Scotia. Fletcher was ordered arrested by George Washington for another scheme to enlist men into the King's service. Other notable family descendants include Fletcher Mathews Haight a federal judge in California, and Henry Huntly Haight, the 10<sup>th</sup> Governor of California.

## Cemetery Topicals by Fred Haynes

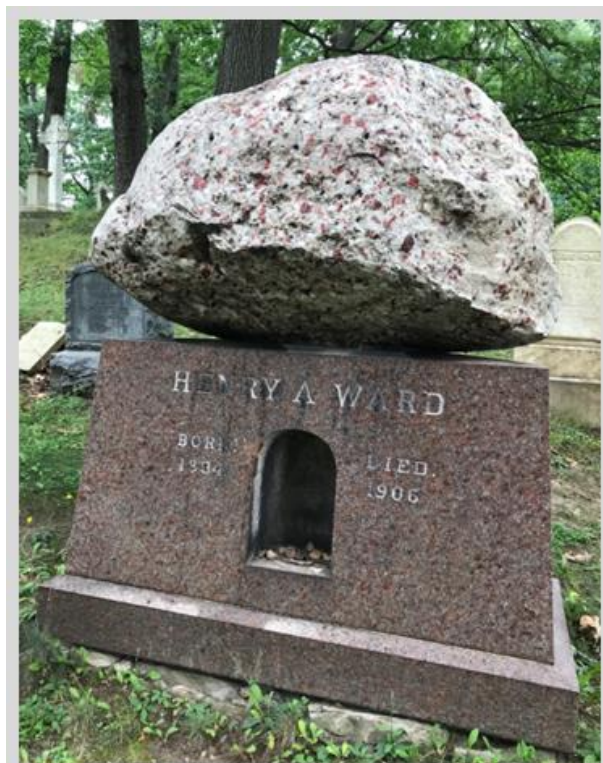
How many of you have ever heard of puddingstone, geologically speaking that is? Well, puddingstone is the name for a conglomerate that consists of distinctly rounded pebbles whose colors contrast with the color of the fine-grained matrix that surrounds and cements them. Apparently the postal service in Afghanistan has heard of puddingstone. In fact, they even liked it well enough to feature it in a set of rocks issued in 1999.



But there is an even more famous example of puddingstone right here in Rochester. Paul Brach and I were out looking for mushrooms amongst the gravestones in Mt. Hope Cemetery when we happened by the gravestone and memorial to Henry Augustus Ward. Henry founded Ward's Natural Science in 1862 in Rochester and the company has been providing science kits (even frogs for dissection) to schools ever since.

Sitting atop Mr. Ward's memorial at Mt. Hope is a huge boulder of puddingstone that Henry found north of Georgian Bay in Ontario. His special pebble conglomerate has been metamorphosed. It consists of red jasper cobbles cemented in a white quartzite groundmass.

Henry's memorial rock was probably transported to the site where it was found in Ontario by recent glaciations, but the rock itself is very old. It is part of the Lorraine Formation of the Cobalt Group of the Huronian Super Group, mostly sediments deposited more than 2.2 billion years. Because there are no index fossils in sedimentary rocks that old, exact dating is difficult. But the Huronian Group rocks are cut by the Nippissing diabase sills which date to 2.22 billion years. Yes, that same diabase that hosts the silver mineralization in Cobalt, Ontario, which itself has been memorialized on a Canadian stamp.



Henry Ward's puddingstone weighs well over a ton. One has to wonder how he got it to Rochester back in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



Image that, finding witch's hats (*Hygrocybe conica*) in a cemetery (left)! They have been honored on a few stamps including this 2001 issue from Guine-Bissau.



Cobalt, Ontario was the largest silver producer in the world during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.