

Synopses of Exhibit Washington and Franklin Coils 1914 Issue

Purpose of Exhibit: This exhibit will show the last flat plate Bureau issued government coils. It features production examples to show how the coils were made along with domestic and foreign usages on cover. The 1914 issue was printed on single line watermarked paper. This issue shows one major change in production. From the beginning of coil production the Bureau had experimented with the perforation gauge of the coils. The first coils were perforated gauge 12. This was not suitable because the coils would break frequently during the coiling stage in production. The Bureau then changed the perforation gauge to 8.5. This made the paper stronger, but difficult to separate causing the stamps to tear unevenly. The Bureau changed the perforation gauge to 10 with the 1914 issue which made the paper strong enough to remain intact during the coiling process and easy to separate when broken apart from the coil roll.

Challenge Factor: The 1914 coil issue were the last flat plate coils produced by the government. They were actually released along with the first rotary press coils in the same year. This may be the reason why some of the values are so difficult to locate on cover. The Bureau was promoting the new rotary press coils and didn't put much emphasis on selling the flat plate coils. This set contains seven issues. A one and two cent coil in vertical and horizontal format with the three, four, and five cent issue in horizontal format only. Mint examples of pairs and line pairs of all the denominations are easy to acquire. Used pairs and line pairs are a bit tougher. The greatest challenge are examples on cover used in time period. The two cent vertical coil along with the one and two cent horizontal coils are fairly easy to find on domestic mail. The rest of the series is another story.

The one cent vertical coil is virtually impossible to locate as a single usage. There are five documented usages. The current example in the Berkun census is a reported example and there have not been any submitted to either the APS or PF for verification of an EDU. The reported example in the census is not verified. **The single usage in the exhibit is the earliest verified example of the three known.**

The three cent horizontal coil is quite scarce with only four known examples on cover. The single usage in this exhibit is a new discovery that is the first documented commercial single usage of this coil. The 3 cent pair on cover is the second earliest date of use and one of two certified covers by the Philatelic Foundation. The APS has certified one single on cover with a 12 cent sheet stamp to Switzerland as the EDU.

The four cent value is also just as difficult, especially as a single usage paying the proper double weight letter rate. The four cent registered cover is one of five examples known.

The five cent is the most difficult of them all on cover. The five cent pair on the registered cover is the ONLY DOCUMENTED USAGE on cover used in time period as well as the EDU for this issue. After consulting the three expertizing agencies, PF, PSE, and APS, there are no known documented single usages.

There are three well known collectors and exhibitors of the Washington and Franklin coils. Ed Sisken, Mick Hadley, and Alan Berkun. The first two spent many years acquiring examples of as many coils as possible on cover for their exhibits. The Sisken and Berkun sales did not have a 1 cent vertical coil on post card or cover. Hadley does have one example of the 1 cent coil on postcard. None of the three people mentioned here had a registered usage of the 2 cent horizontal or vertical coil in their exhibits. The two in this exhibit are new discoveries. The Sisken sale had one example of the 3 cent coil, a pair and line pair on a registered cover. The Berkun sale had the EDU, a single on a registered cover to Switzerland which is ex Hadley. The **3 cent single** example in the exhibit is a new discovery. The Sisken sale did contain a single usage of the 4 cent coil on a double weight cover. Berkun had a 4 cent single and 1 cent coil on a cover to Sweden which is the EDU as well as ex Hadley. The Sisken sale contained one example of the 5 cent coil on cover, but it was a very late Zeppelin mail usage in 1930 with 13 copies of the coil. The 5 cent pair on registered cover is ex Hadley, Berkun, and is the only documented usage found in time period. Many of the EDUs in Berkun's exhibit came from Mick Hadley. Mick Hadley's exhibit was the most comprehensive exhibit ever assembled on coils and last competed in the C of C in 1991.

Organization: The exhibit is organized in the traditional format. The beginning deals with the production process and printing varieties of the perf-10 coils. There is no archival material available because there was none made specifically for coils since they were made from sheet stamps. The covers are organized by issue since the focus is suppose to be on the specific stamp and not necessarily the usage like a postal history format.

What is Presented: The exhibit begins with showing a comparison of the three perforation varieties to illustrate the changes made by the Bureau in the production of each issue leading up to the 1914 coil series. The production section displays a variety of production examples starting with the special "COIL PLATES" used for the vertical coils.

The production varieties include position pieces such as plate finishers initials, plate numbers, and guide lines. **These printing varieties in the production section are the only examples available in this issue.**

In the previous issues there were Bureau imprints and the letter "A", which were used to designate which plate the coils were printed from when both the Star and "A" plates were used in production at the same time. The Bureau imprints and letter "A" were dropped when the stamps were only produced from the "A" plates. It also includes examples of coil construction pieces such as paste-ups, leader strips, and trailer strips. The postal section of the exhibit is arranged to feature the individual stamp issue and its different usages.

There is a large majority of 1 and 2 cent usages due to those issues being the workhorse of the series. For the 1 and 2 cent denominations there are 10 primary usages shown compared to 4 for the 3, 4, and 5 cent denominations. The 3, 4, and 5 cent issues were used very little and are very scarce on cover.

New Additions/Changes: The most recent additions to the exhibit are a 1 cent splice repair to a strip of four attached to a leader strip of 1,000, a third class wrapper with a 1 cent vertical coil precancelled in Federalsburg, Maryland sent to Austria, a first class post card with a 2 cent horizontal coil paying the correct rate with an attachment inside a glassine. A splice repair on a perf-10 coil is quite scarce since the new perforations were stronger and should not have broken. The third class wrapper to Austria is just the second precancelled flat plate coil example the exhibitor has been able to find in 15 years of collecting coils. Post cards with glitter were charged the first class letter rate and placed inside a glassine to contain the glitter. The post card is tied to the glassine because the sender dated their message on the card to the recipient with the month, day, year, and city.

Material Highlights:

- 1) A 1 cent vertical precancelled coil on a wrapper to Austria.
- 2) A splice repair to a strip of 4 on a leader strip of 1,000.
- 3) A 2 cent horizontal coil used to pay the **fourth class rate** for sealed merchandise.
- 4) A 1 cent guide line pair paying the first class letter rate.
- 5) The **1 cent vertical coil** paying the first class post card rate.
- 6) A **3 cent horizontal single usage on a commercial cover.**
- 7) A 3 cent horizontal coil pair. **Second earliest** documented usage.
- 8) The **EDU** of the 5 cent horizontal coil pair paying the 10 cent registration fee.
- 9) A 2 cent horizontal coil single to **Indo China** on a short paid cover with **Indo Chinese postage dues.**
- 10) Registered usages of the 2 cent horizontal and vertical coils.