

New "A" Plate Discovery

The first 1908 coil issues of the Third Bureau were produced on the Imprint Plates which had 2mm horizontal spacing between designs. When stamps are printed by the flat plate method the paper was moistened to create a sharper image. When the paper dried it shrank unevenly which resulted in poorly centered designs when the sheet was perforated. To correct this problem the Bureau designed new plates with varied horizontal spacing. The new Star Plates had 2mm and 3mm spacing. The center eight rows were 2mm and outer six rows on each side of the pane of 400 were 3mm spacing. This new plate was used on the later issues of 1908 and the next 1910 issue which was printed on single line watermarked paper. This experiment did not correct the problem so the Bureau designed another plate. The new plate had 2.75mm horizontal spacing between all designs. It was named the "A" Plate. This plate was thought to be used to produce the next coil issue of 1910 which had 8.5 gauge perforations. The evidence presented in this article will show examples of the "A" plate being used to print coil stamps for the second coil issues of 1910.

There are certain characteristics which can be used to identify what plate the coil stamps were printed on. Since line pairs come from the center of the pane of 400, those printed on the Imprint and Star plates will have 2mm spacing. Line pairs on the "A" plates will have wider 2.75mm spacing. Note the 1 cent examples in this article. They show an obvious difference when placed side by side. Two other characteristics are the imprint and plate number.

The cover presented in this article has two important characteristics which verify the imperforate coil stamps were printed on the "A" plates. The line strip of four has the wider 2.75mm spacing and the paste-up pair has part of the imprint, the letter "A" and part of the Bureau imprint



The top strip of eight is from the Star plates. The line pair has the narrow 2mm spacing. The bottom strip of four has the wider 2.75mm spacing. This strip was printed on the "A" plates. Both of the strips were printed on single line watermarked paper. The two have the same Scott number, 383H. Based on this evidence, there should be a new listing in the catalog because they were printed on two different plates. The first coils in 1908 were printed on double lined watermarked paper and perforated gauge 12. They were also printed on the Imprint and Star plates. The second series in 1910 were printed on single line watermarked paper, perforated gauge 12, and printed on the Star plates. The 2 cent horizontal imperforate coil on cover is a new discovery of an imperforate horizontal coil printed on the A plates. The question arises here with this new variety; does it merit a new listing in the Scott's catalog?

B.M. Johns
1326 Vinton Ave.,
Memphis, Tenn.



40133



Mr. F. H. Floyd.

69 Perham St. 163253

West Roxbury, 32,
Mass.