Reexamining Bomar's B01-02 Pan-American Station Rubber 7 Bar Marking

John Cunningham, John Moore, Peter Miselis



In his book <u>Postal Markings of United States</u> Expositions, William J. Bomar identified a rubber hand applied marking consisting of a circular date stamp and 7 bars as B01-02 within his original identification system. Through three editions of Bomar's work, a story detailing the career of the marking has been developed to explain the transformation of the device from one that produced clear and sharp impressions to one that some four months later created markings that were almost unreadable. Consistent among all iterations of the explanation was the belief that there was just one device. This article will attempt to convince the reader that there were actually two devices and will support this theory by presenting actual images of the markings from the most comprehensive catalog of images assembled to date.

The current theory on the career of the B01-02 marking, as presented in the third edition of Bomar is as follows:

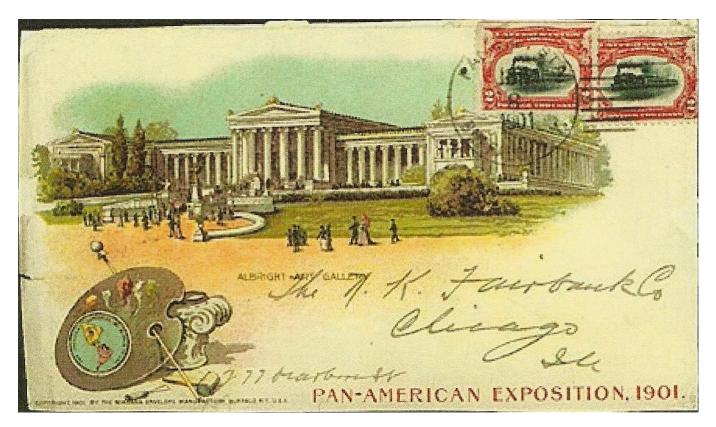
- The marking is used beginning May 26 and produces clean and clear impressions through June 8. Markings through June 12 are classified B01-02A(Round dial and killer bars).
- On or around June 8 someone cleans the rubber marking with solvent that caused the rubber of the marking to begin to distort.
- Between June 12 and August 1 the marking is stated to be showing the effects of the cleaning and is classified as B01-02B(Deformed dial and killer bars).
- Degradation of the device is theorized to have continued until the damage was so extensive that the bars were removed from the device sometime before August 1.
- Between August 1 and September 30 the marking is classified as B01-02C(Deformed dial and no killer bars).

Images of B01-02 will now be presented in chronological order to support the following theory:

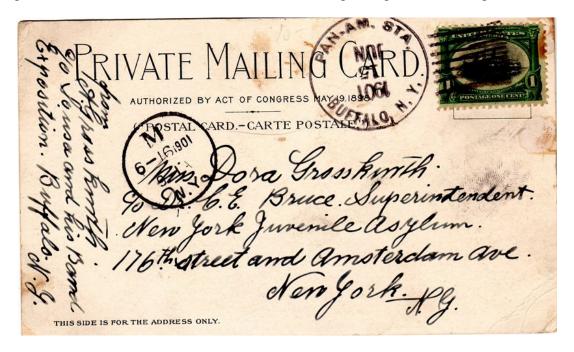
- There were two separate B01-02 devices which will be referred to as Rim 1 and Rim 2.
- There was only one set of rubber day, month and year slugs which were used in the rim in service at any time
- Rim 2 was brought into service only while Rim 1 was being repaired.



Earliest documented use of the B01-02 marking. The rim is circular, the bars are thin and straight, and all lettering along the interior circumference of the rim, as well as the day, month and year are clearly legible. This is Rim 1 which includes the bars as well as 'PAN-AM. STA. BUFFALO, N.Y.'



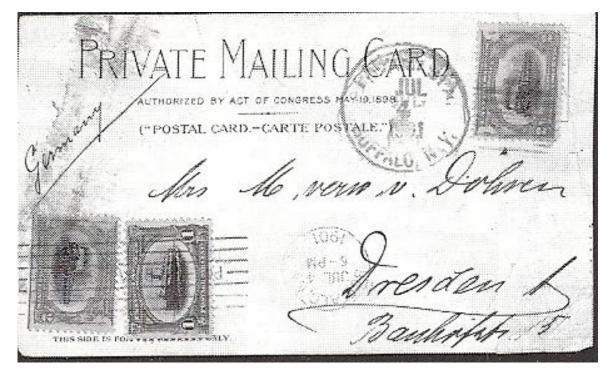
Above is an example of B01-02 from June 8, perhaps the example cited in Bomar to arrive at this date as the end of B01-02A(Round dial and killer bars). Future examples should show damage from whatever event or events cause the marking to begin deteriorating.



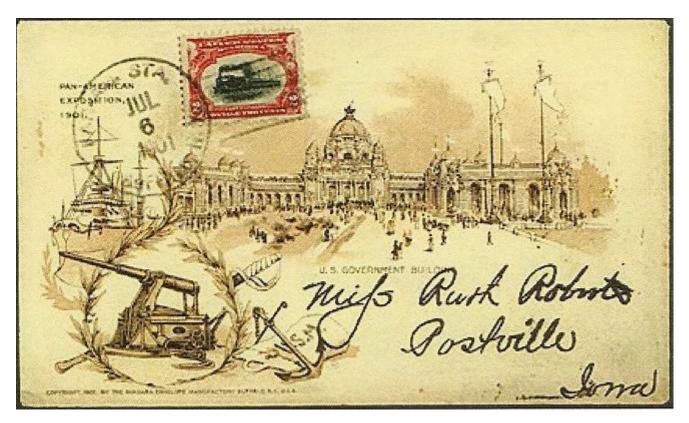
Above a June 15 example. Note that the day/month/year indicia are nor oriented properly to the rim lettering, but the marking is still clear and sharp.



Above is an example from 6/28 which again appears to be in undamaged condition.



Above is an example from 7/4. It is double struck, but appears to be either in original condition, or it may be just beginning to show some signs of degradation. I am sure July 4th was a very busy time at the Pan American Station and this marking was certainly getting heavy use.



Above is a use from 7/6 Note the left and lower portions of the rim are showing a little 'wiggle' here and there. Also, the tops of the letters in 'PAN-AM.' are not showing strongly.



Now we see a 7/9 use and there are clearly problems with the device. The impression has increased thickness all around, rim 'wiggle' is increasing, and the bars are starting to deform. Either the theorized cleaning, or heavy use, has damaged the device.



A 7/18 use showing the damage to the device. Note that the postcard was marked with B01-02 on 7/18 with no postage applied and held for postage, then run through the Universal machine on 8/1. What is important to note is that the orientation between the day/month/year indicia and the lettering around the rim has changed. It seems the rim has been rotated independently from the date markings and the bars. Was someone trying to disassemble the device?



A confirmatory example also from 7/18 showing the reorientation of the rim lettering to bars.

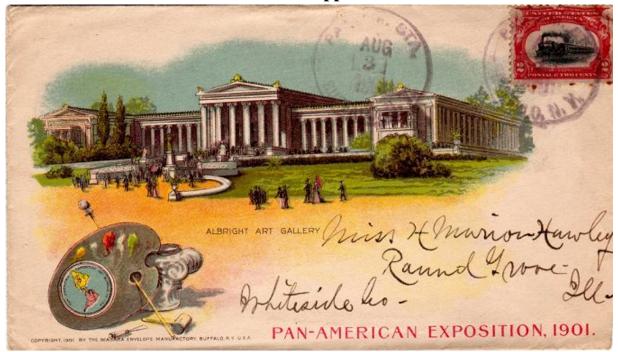
Rim 2 Appears



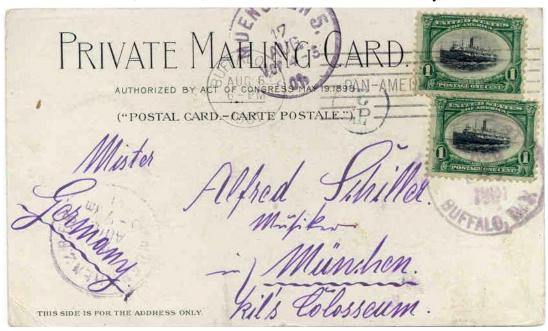
B01-02 used 7/23 to mark a Postal Card that had been run through the Universal machine upside down. This is clearly not the B01-02 marking that we have seen change from 5/27 to 7/18. The rim, the rim lettering and the 7 bars are thin and clearly defined and the rim is free of 'wiggles'. Note that the orientation of the day/month/year is again different than was seen from 5/27 to before 7/18, but also different from what is seen on 7/18. Also note that the day/month/year impression, unlike the rest of the marking, are still thicker and with a smudgy appearance as seen in uses between 7/6 and 7/18. So what would explain this example as it does not fit the current theory in Bomar?

This 7/23 use is the first appearance of Rim 2. For some reason Rim 1 was taken out of service. From what we have seen it was certainly taken out because of accumulated damage resulting from heavy use and/or imprudent cleaning. Rim 2 was brought into service, but there was not a second set of slugs for the day/month/year indicia so those were removed from Rim 1 and used in Rim 2. So if the story stopped here, one could presume that Rim 1 was either kept in the drawer, or discarded. Only looking at subsequent examples would tell for sure.

Rim 1 Reappears



Of the 43 images of B01-02 markings researched for this article, this use on 8/3 is the first example documented after the introduction of Rim 2 on 7/23. Clearly this is not Rim 2. This is the first reintroduction of Rim 1 after it was taken out of service for repairs after 7/18. Note that the 'wiggles' in the rim have been reduced except for a notable bulge above the 'N' in 'PAN'. The rim is also essentially round. The lettering around the rim shows more clearly. The 'AUG' month slug show very clearly because it has not been used to date, but the year slug remains washed out. And, of course, the bars have been removed entirely.



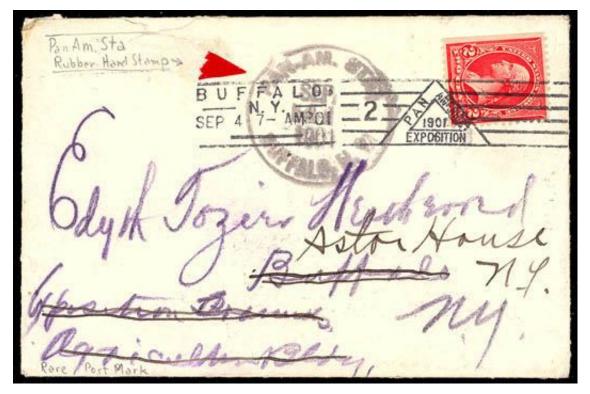
An example from 8/6 showing similar characteristics



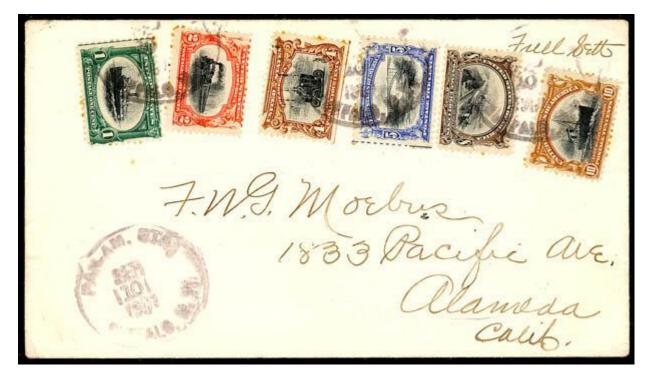
An 8/12 use shows the bars still missing, but that the bulge above the 'N' in 'PAN' is getting bigger. The impression is taking on a thick appearance again and even the 'AUG' month slug appears to be showing the negative results of heavy use or cleaning(s).



An 8/22 example shows what appears to be physical condition issues with the right side of the marking which is very smudgy as compared to the left side.



An example from 9/4 shows that the bars are still missing and the overall thickening of the impression and the associated smudginess have spread to the left side of the marking.

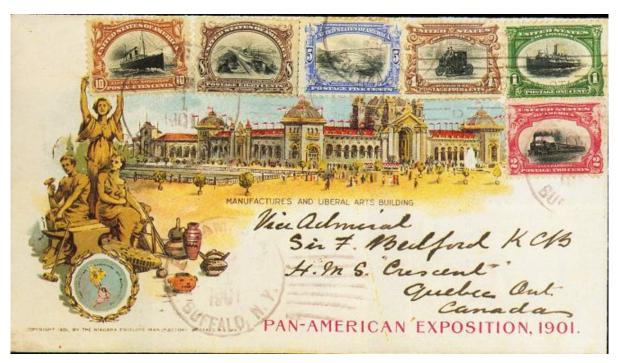


An example from 9/10 shows that the marking has become essentially unreadable.

Rim 2 Reappears



Rim 2 reappears on 9/11 showing all of the characteristics that is showed when it first appeared 7/23. The 7 bars are present again, the rim lettering is clear and clean, and only the year slug is swollen and smudgy which is consistent with having been switched over from Rim 1.

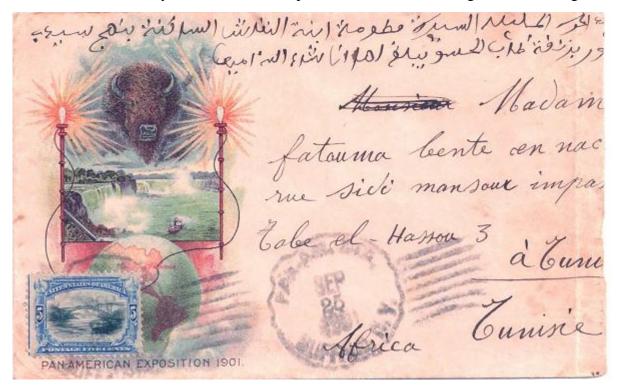


A second example of Rim 2 from 9/11. The condition of the bars suggests that the bars might have been independent of the rims on each device, but that is not as clear. If the history of B01-02 remains consistent, then one would expect the next chronological example of the marking the revert back to a repaired version of Rim 1, or, perhaps, for Rim 1 never to reappear.

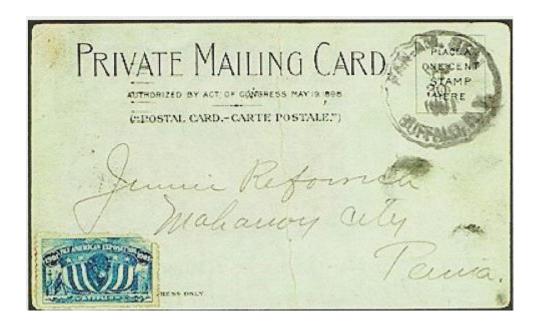
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It's 9/24 and Rim 1 reappears after extensive repairs that include the bulge above the 'N' in 'PAN' having been pushed back into place and the original bars having been placed back on the device. Twelve days after the second repairs, however, the marking is on its last legs.



Rim 1 on 9/25. The rim and the associated lettering has had it.



The last documented use of the B01-02 marking in any form is 9/30, Rim 1 with bars removed.

Certainly more than the 43 examples researched for this article exist and new examples will come to light. However, the theory presented here is consistent with all recorded examples of the marking and accounts for the following:

- Fluctuations in the clarity of the marking across time.
- Disappearances and reappearances of the 7 bar killer portion.
- The momentary appearances of relatively pristine impressions followed by the reappearance of substantially altered form of the marking.
- The circumstance that there is currently no one date on which both Rim 1 and Rim 2 appear to have been used concurrently.

It is also interesting to note that B01-01, the steel duplex handstamp does not appear until 10/21 and that no example of B01-02 appears after 9/30. A reasonable conclusion would be that the Pan American Station, dissatisfied with the performance of the rubber B01-02 ordered the steel B01-01 and once it was received, opted not to use the still serviceable Rim2 of B01-02.

Images of this marking not included in the census are welcomed. Email images to panexpoguy@wowway.com Any comments or criticisms are also welcomed.

