

# The United States Large Numeral Postage Dues

United States postage due stamps were first distributed to postmasters in May and June of 1879 in advance of their mandatory use on postage due mail from July 1, 1879. The series as originally issued included only one, two, three and five cent denominations. Later in 1879, ten, thirty and fifty cent denominations were added. The large numeral design continued to be used until gradually replaced by the small numeral design first issued in 1894. Over this fifteen year period the series of stamps was printed in a wide range of shades.

This exhibit is arranged along the following outline:

- Frame 1. Essays and Proofs
- Frame 2. Unused Stamps, Used Stamps
- Frame 3. Cancels, Precancels
- Frame 4. Domestic Uses
- Frame 5. Domestic Uses, Overseas Uses
- Frame 6. Overseas Uses



**REGISTERED POSTAGE-STAMP RETURN BILL.**

If the Package referred to has been received the POSTMASTER will sign this bill and mark it CORRECT, and return it by first mail to New York. If not received, retain this Return Bill one week to await the arrival of the package, and mark the explanation of that time it is not received, sign this Return Bill, mark it NOT RECEIVED, and forward to NEW YORK, N. Y.

New York, U. S., \_\_\_\_\_

Postmaster at North Monroe **JUNE 21 1879**

Waldo County.

No. **6570**

Received of the Postmaster the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ Dollars and \_\_\_\_\_ Cents for the postage due on the above mentioned package, bearing the following stamps, bearing the following denominations, and the following postmarks, to-wit:

Return this Bill to New York, N. Y.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT.  
POST OFFICE AT NEW YORK, N. Y.  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

REGISTERED BUSINESS.

NEW YORK JUN 23 12 M 79

Postmaster, No. 117 Montre

Waldo County,

Me

A penalty of \$300 is fixed by law, for using this Envelope for other than Official Business.

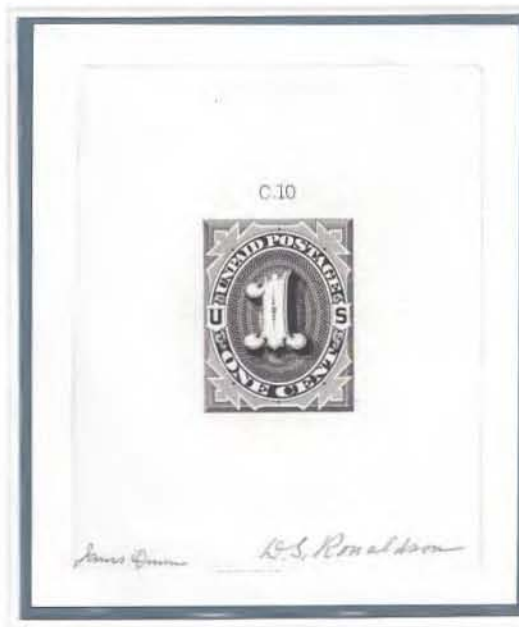
# "UNPAID POSTAGE" Die Essays

## On Ivory Paper

The American Banknote Company produced essays of the four low denomination stamps designs in March - April 1879. The design was as adopted except lettering above value tablet which was later changed to "POSTAGE DUE." James Dunn engraved the lathe background while Douglas S. Ronaldson engraved the letters and numerals.



One Cent black



One Cent black brown  
signed by James Dunn and D.S. Ronaldson



One Cent scarlet  
signed by James Dunn and D.S. Ronaldson



One Cent blue  
signed by James Dunn and D.S. Ronaldson

# "UNPAID POSTAGE" Die Essays

## On Ivory Paper

The large format die proofs allow room above imprint of design to include the die numbers. The die numbers are: C.10 for One Cent, C.23 for Two Cents, C.24 for Three Cents and C.25 for Five Cents.



One Cent red brown



Five Cents black brown



Five Cents blue

# "UNPAID POSTAGE" Die Essays

## On India Paper

The prints on india paper exist in several colors and most were either cut close or cut to shape and the die numbers above were reduced or trimmed away.



One Cent (partial die number above), Three Cents and Five Cents dull brown cut small



Three Cents black cut small



Five Cents green cut small



Three Cents and Five Cents gray black cut close



# Large Die Proofs

## Black on India Paper

The approved design included "POSTAGE DUE" above numeral of denomination. The American Banknote Company produced die proofs on india paper sunk on card before final approval of the dies. The four on this page were produced in early 1879 while the three high values on following page were produced later in the year.



One Cent Die C.10.A.



Two Cents Die C.23.A.



Three Cents Die C.24.A.



Five Cents Die C.25.A.

# Large Die Proofs

## Black on India Paper

The three high values on this page were produced later in the year 1879 and do not bear die numbers above design.



Ten Cents



Thirty Cents



Fifty Cents

## Large Die Proofs

### Trial Colors on India Paper

The American Banknote Company also produced die proofs on india paper in several. Although commonly called "trial colors" is likely that they were produced subsequent to the stamp production as presentation pieces.



Thirty Cents olive bistre.



Fifty Cents orange

# Large Die Proofs

## Claret on India Paper

The claret die proofs on india paper, sunk on card, are similar to the "trial color" proofs on previous page. The proofs are not printed in the same fluorescent claret ink as the 1891 issue and date of production is unknown.



One Cent Die C.10.A.



Five Cents Die C.25.A.



Ten Cents without die number



## Roosevelt Small Die Proofs

### Brown Shades, Printed in 1903

In 1903 a special printing from the original dies was used to produce a set of proofs on india paper with smaller 3 to 5mm margins. These proofs were mounted on gray cards, one set in brown shades representing the shades as issued in 1879 and a second set in a fluorescent claret to represent the 1891 color change. These proofs were collated with other proofs into presentation albums for dignitaries. Some 85 albums were distributed under Theodore Roosevelt.



one cent through five cents denominations were printed in pale brown, high values in reddish brown

## Roosevelt Small Die Proofs

### Fluorescent Claret, Printed in 1903

From the 1903 special printing from original dies. This set printed in the same fluorescent (aniline ink) claret of the stamps issued in 1891.



## Panama Pacific Small Die Proofs

### Bright Claret, Printed in 1915

A special printing of small die proofs was produced in 1915 for the Panama-Pacific Exposition. These proofs on yellowish wove paper were printed in a non fluorescent ink.



it is believed that six sets were produced

## Hybrid "H" Proof

Salesman Sample, Printed circa 1890

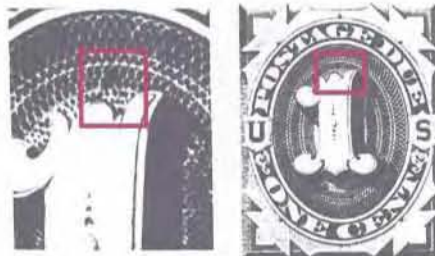
This proof is from a salesman's sample book. India paper proofs were windowed and mounted on card in the shape of the letter "H."

No regular india paper proofs of the three high values exist in the medium brown shade found on this proof. Fewer than ten examples of the "Hybrid "H" proof are reported.



## 1891 One Cent Black Plate Proofs

In conjunction with introduction of fluorescent aniline ink in early 1891, both of the one-cent printing plates then in use, plates 313 and 314, were completely re-entered. The stamps printed from the second states of these plates show a distinct flaw (the "Irwin" flaw) above the numeral of denomination in each position.



the "Irwin" flaw





## Plate Proofs

On India, Printed in Brown (low values) and Dark Brown (high values)

The American Banknote Company printed plate proofs on india paper mounted on card during the original production phase in early 1879. Later in the year when the additional three high values were ordered, proofs were printed in dark brown.





## Plate Proofs

### On India, Printed in Claret

In 1891 the American Banknote Company began uses aniline ink that fluoresces to print the postage due stamps. Plate proofs were produced that show the second state of the one cent plate as evidenced by the "Irwin" flaw which appears in all positions.





## Plate Proofs

The American Banknote Company printed plate proofs directly on card five times between 1879 and 1893. There are subtle differences in shade as well as slight differences in card thickness

### On Card, Printed 1879 in Brown



### On Card, Printed 1885 in Deep Brown



### On Card, Printed 1890 in Brown Red



### On Card, Printed 1893 in Claret (fluorescent)





# Plate Proofs

## On Card, Atlanta Trial Color Proofs, Printed in 1881

The American Banknote Company printed plate proofs in five different colors in 1881 at the request of the Post Office Department. These proofs were displayed at the International Cotton Exposition held in Atlanta, Georgia that same year. One sheet of one hundred was printed of each denomination in each color.





## Plate Proofs

### Claret on Stamp Paper, Gummed

In addition to the plate proofs on india paper, the American Banknote Company also printed plate proofs on stamp paper that were gummed in the fashion of issued stamps. These fluoresce under UV light because of the aniline ink used and all one cent stamps show the "Irwin" flaw.





## Unused Stamps

### Brown Shades, 1879 to 1884

The original denominations of the series (1¢, 2¢, 3¢ and 5¢) were issued to postmasters in May 1879 to be put into use on July 1, 1879. The three high values were issued in September 1879. These stamps were printed in shades of brown as follows: pale brown (1879), yellow brown (1879) and pale red brown (1883).



### Red Brown Shades, 1884 to 1890

Beginning in 1884 more red was added to the printing ink in successive printings. The new shades appeared as follows: deep red brown (1884), brown red (1885), deep brown red (1887), and deep red (1890).



## Unused Multiples

Brown Shades, 1879 to 1884



Red Brown Shades, 1884 to 1890





# Unused Plate Number Multiples

Brown Shades, 1879 to 1884



One Cent, Plate No. 313, imprint, plate number block from left pane



Three Cents, Plate No. 316, imprint, plate number block from right pane



Three Cents, Plate No. 316, imprint, plate number and guide arrow block from left pane



# Unused Multiples

Red Brown Shades, 1884 to 1890





# Unused Stamps

## Claret Shades, 1891 - 1893

Beginning in 1891 an aniline ink was used to print the postage due stamps. The claret stamps printed with this new ink formulation fluoresce bright yellow under UV light. All stamps termed claret fluoresce and shades range from bright claret (1891) to deep reddish claret (1892). All one cent stamps printed in claret show the "Irwin" flaw above the numeral of denomination as the plates in use were entirely re-entered.



all 1¢ stamps show "Irwin" flaw





# Unused Multiples

Claret Shades, 1891 - 1893





# Unused Plate Number Multiples

Claret Shades, 1891 - 1893



One Cent, Plates No. 313 and No. 314 (both plates completely re-entered and show "Irwin" flaw)



Two Cents, Plate No. 464 and Three Cents, Plate No. 317 (note extra row of perforations at top)



Five Cents, Plate No. 318

# Unused Position Pieces

Claret Shades, 1891 - 1893





## Unused Varieties

### Production Variety Ten Cents Brown

Ten Cents Brown imperforate. The only major production error of the series is a sheet of the ten cents imperforate stamps that was apparently distributed to the post office in New York.



## Plate Varieties



Plate Gash.  
Exists only  
on 2¢ red  
browns.



Plate scratches on 2¢ claret.



Plate Scratch. Exists  
only on 1¢ claret.  
Positions L74 and  
L75 as proved by  
position block of 18  
on unused claret page.



Plate scratches on 2¢ claret.

## Specimen Overprints

### Red Brown Shades, 1885

The U.S. Post Office Department supplied examples of current issues on several occasions to the Universal Postal Union. In 1885 several sets of the postage due stamps then in use were supplied. These were overprinted "SPECIMEN" in red.

**SPECIMEN**



## Special Printing

### Deep Brown, 1879

In 1879 the Post Office Department made a special printing of postage dues to fill stamp collector as unused stamps were not to be sold directly to the public. To fill these needs, it seems the Post Office supplied stamps from existing stock and also printed stamps. The specially printed stamps are a deep brown and more clearly printed.





## Used Stamps

### Brown Shades, 1879 to 1884

The original denominations of the series (1¢, 2¢, 3¢ and 5¢) were issued to postmasters in May 1879 to be put into use on July 1, 1879. The three high values were issued in September 1879. These stamps were printed in shades of brown as follows: pale brown (1879), yellow brown (1879) and pale red brown (1883).



### Red Brown Shades, 1884 to 1890

Beginning in 1884 more red was added to the printing ink in successive printings. The new shades appeared as follows: deep red brown (1884), brown red (1885), deep brown red (1887), and deep red (1890).



## Used Shades

### Chart of Brown Shades, 1879 to 1884



### First Month Use



14 July 1879 3¢ pale brown applied upon arrival at Plymouth, Massachusetts



# Used Multiples

Brown Shades, 1879 to 1884





# Used Shades

## Red Brown Shades, 1884 to 1890

Shades on cover (top to bottom): brown red, deep brown red and deep red.





## Used Shades

### Red Brown Multiples

Ten cents red brown, early shade, block of 30 paying international postage due.



## Used Stamps

### Claret Shades, 1891 to 1893

Beginning in 1891 an aniline ink was used to print the postage due stamps. The claret stamps printed with this new ink formulation fluoresce bright yellow under UV light.



### Earliest Reported Use of One Cent Claret



3 July 1891 1¢ claret applied at New York City



# Cancels

## Distinctive Cancels



Postage Due used in China



Mystic Bridge,  
CT



1880 Edgar, Nebraska "wheel of fortune" cancel



# Cancels

## With Text, Letters or Numerals



Held For Postage



Paid



Lewis (Holt)



Way



Short (Paid)



(Un)claimed



Removed



Canceled



Steam(boat)



Springfield,  
Mass.



Insufficiently  
Paid



Uncla(imed)



"W"



"H"



"T"



"21" rate



"5" rate



1880 St. Louis "Short Paid" cancel



# Precancels

## Waverly Punch Precancels

Two different punch precancels are known used at Westerly, Rhode Island.



derby hats

1879 use of "derby hats" Westerly punch precancel



triple punch



1879 use of three hole punch precancel of Westerly

# Precancels

## Baltimore Punch Precancels

Baltimore briefly used a punch precancel of "twin hearts" in 1879 and early 1880.



twin hearts



1879 use of "twin hearts" Baltimore precancel

Punch precancels, town(s) of use unknown.



double punch





# Precancels

## New York City "string of pearls"



"Y" points left

New York City introduced postage due precancels in late August 1879. The so-called "string of pearls" precancel remained in use until March 1887 and exists in various colors (grayish black is scarce) and orientations. The precancels were applied while stamps were in sheet form using a rubber roller applied to a single row of ten stamps at one time.



September 1879 second month use of New York City precancel in gray black

# Precancels

## New York City "string of pearls"



"Y" points right



strip of nine with gray black precancel



"Y" points down (applied in error in column format rather than row)





# Precancels

## New York City "string of pearls"



17 March 1887 last month use of New York precancel



stamp with mis-aligned application of precancel

# Cancels

## New York Double Ovals

The use of New York "string of pearls" precancel ended in 1887. A double oval "PO" cancel was used briefly in blue and then in black for several years. Other New York City Stations used similar ovals with initials.



Earliest use of blue double oval (June 25, 1887) and earliest use of black (November 16, 1887)



# Precancels / Cancels

## Boston

Boston adopted the use of precancels at an early date. It appears that some of the markings exist only as precancels while others were also employed as regular cancels. No distinction is made here.



negative "A"



Purple ink was used for precancels until red late 1879. Red was then used through 1884.



CROSS



# Precancels / Cancels

## Boston

The Boston "X" cancels exist in several minor varieties that differ in size and surrounding box or circles. Some used as precancels. This display is simplified.



Red ink was used through 1884 when replaced with black.





**Precancels**

**Boston**



1888 use large boxed Boston precancel



1893 use small boxed Boston precancel

# Precancels

## Boston

The Boston encircled "X" cancel is only reported used as a precancel.



encircled "X"



1893 use of encircled "X" Boston precancel on cover from England



# Precancels

## With One to Four Bars

Several offices used bar precancels in various forms (one to four bar versions are shown). It not possible to accurately attribute a particular format to a single office on a loose stamp.



1889 Rochester, New York triple bar precancel on short paid Special Delivery cover

# Precancels

## Chicago



block "C" ovals



16 March 1881 Chicago block "C" in double oval precancel, magenta carrier backstamp



"Chicago Pearls"





# Cancel

## With Word "Due"

The use of circle that include the word "Due" was prohibited.



DE WIND WHITE & CO.,

STREET,  
PHILADELPHIA,  
PENNA.



# Cancels

## Circles

Several post offices used circle cancels of various sizes.



1881 magenta circle cancels of Brooklyn

