

The Beginning of Priority Mail U.S. Special Handling: 1925-1959



Wednesday, June 1, 2016

Robert G. Rufe, Director

United States Stamp Society

rrufe1@aol.com

SpecialHandling.Weebly.com

Here is the QEII you are all familiar with:



or ...



or ...



This is a story about a QE many do not know.

In the main hall – a stamp you all recognize...



June 17, 2014 this stamp sold for \$9.5 Million!

June 17th is also my birthday!

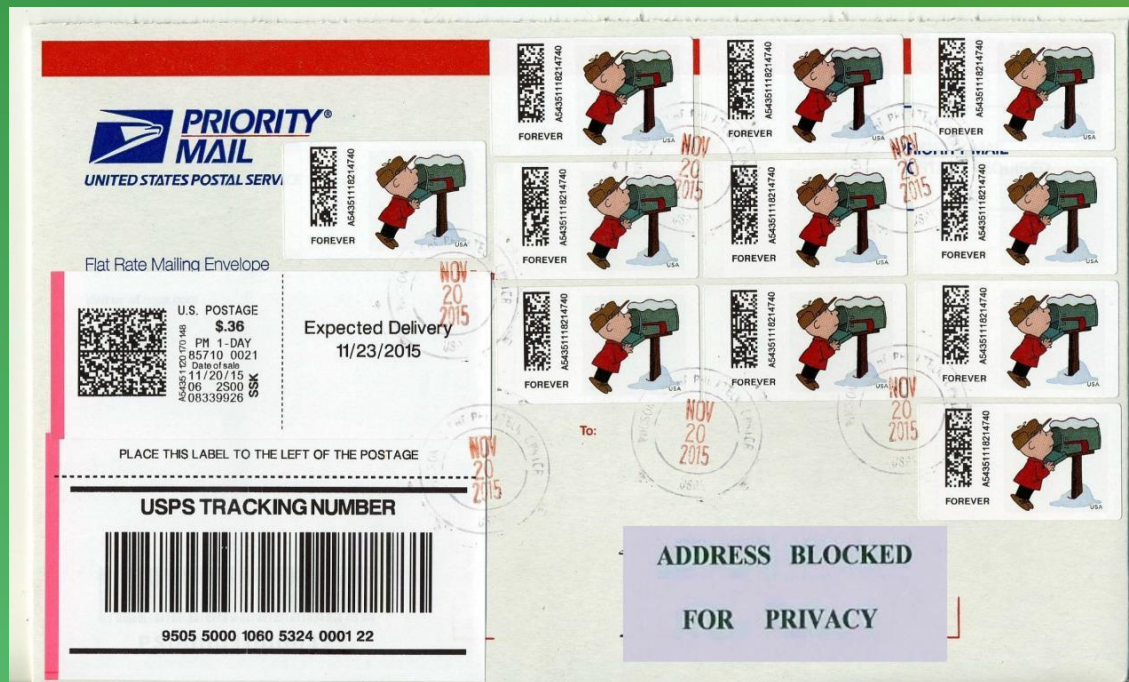
**The 1¢ British Guiana Magenta is Unique...
Also in the main hall... So is this!**



Scott Catalog No. QE3a, USED, Unique, Unpriced!

The Beginning of Priority Mail Parcel Service

Priority Mail Means Speed and Efficiency



**“Special Handling
may not fare well in
International
Competition; it may
not be seen as
‘Significant’ in the
international
community.”**

**FIP Option Scoring Option
APS StampShow, 2011**

Priority Mail Forerunner: Air Parcel Post...

Introduced on September 1, 1948



Surviving Covers
are Scarce.

Moved Parcels from Post
Office of Sender to Post
Office of Receiver

Air Parcel Post – First Day of Service (Hammelman)

Air Parcel Post

The Best Known Example...



**80¢ Hawaii Airmail
Scott C46 – 3/26/1952**

Orchids by Mail!

**Fragile? – Yes.
Perishable? – Yes.
Need for Speed.**

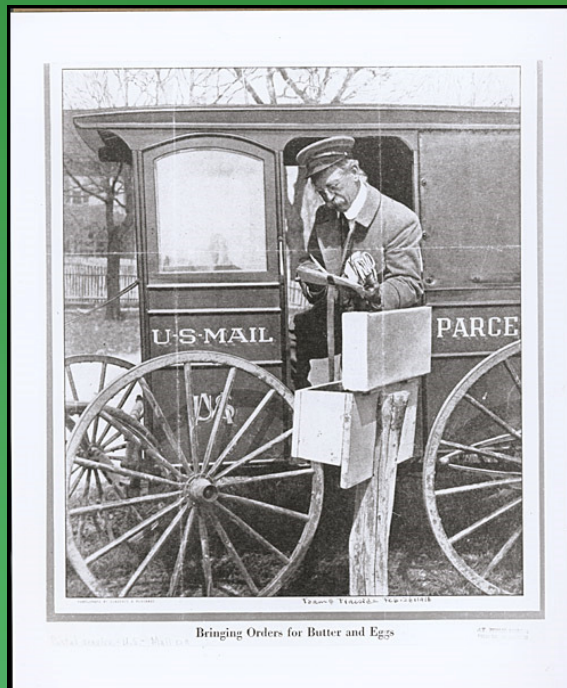
**What does it have to
do with Special
Handling?**

What was the forerunner service for Air Parcel Post?

Special Handling!

The Regs were written in 1925 for:

Live Chicks...



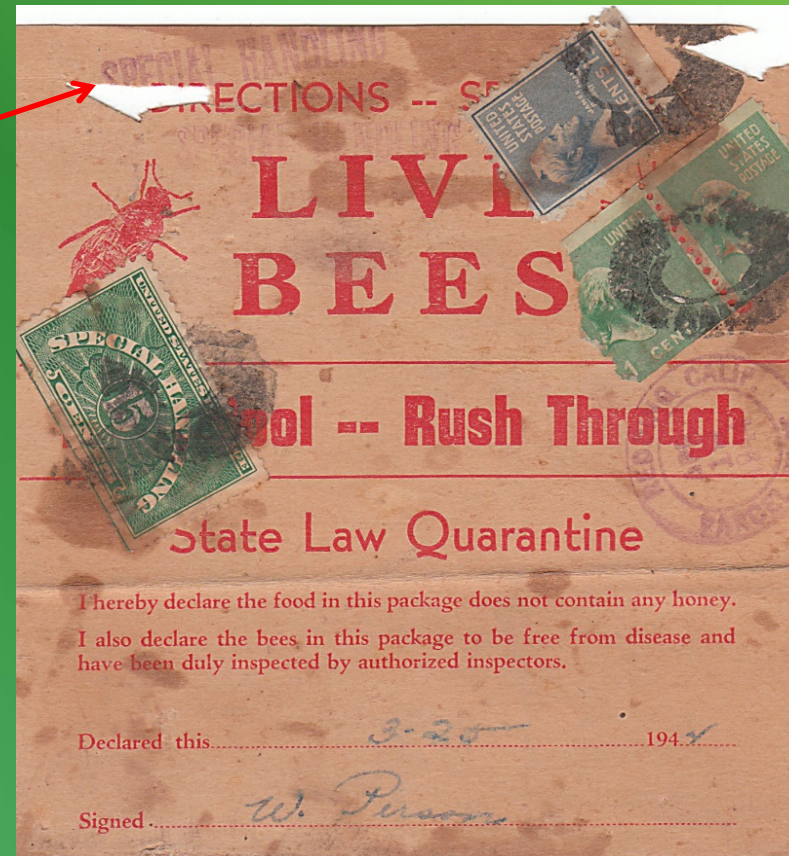
Parcel Post, 1913
No Expediting Available...
...but the carriers knew!



The Post Office was already providing the service,
So... Why not charge for it?

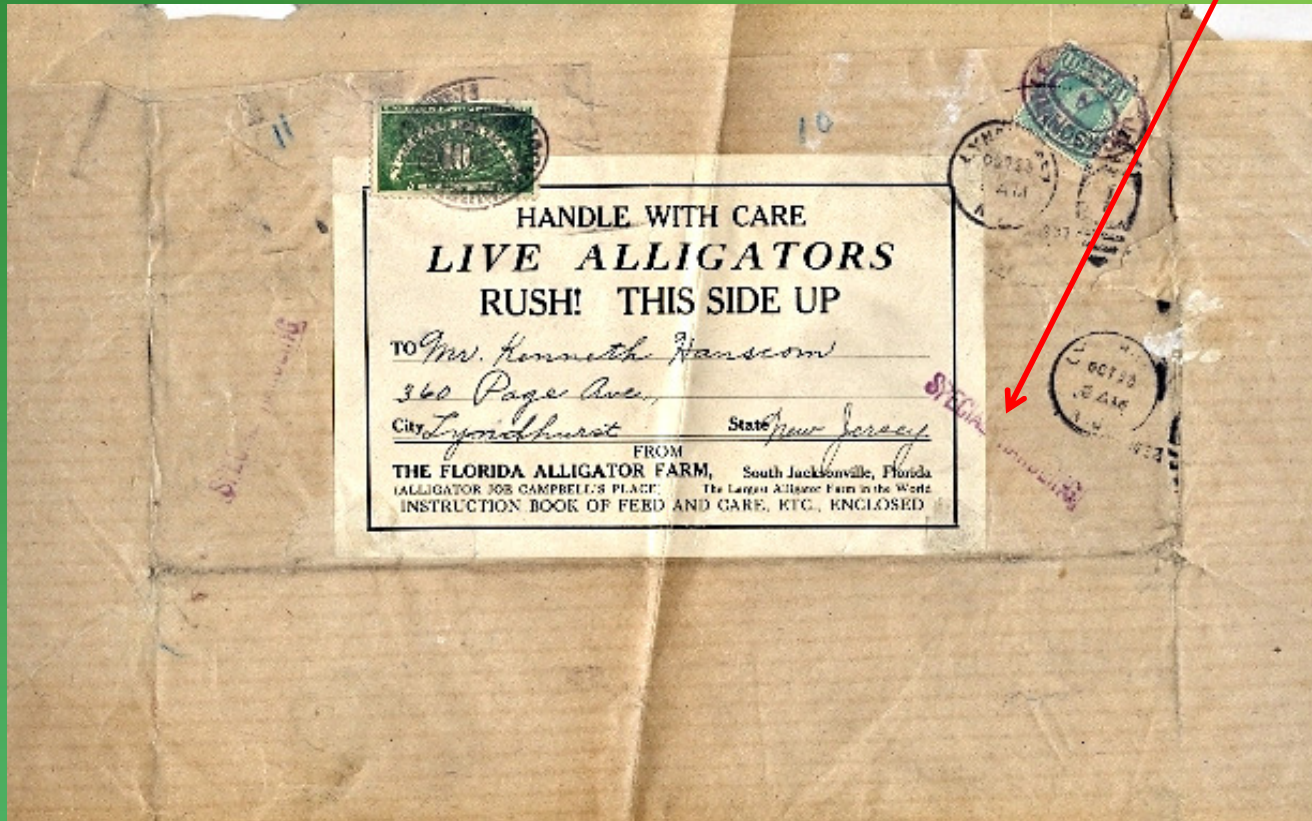
... and Bees,

Typical Auxiliary Marking:



Rarity: I have never seen a 25¢ QE4/4a on a label for any of these critters?

... and, Surprise, Baby Alligators!



What other critters might be shipped with Special Handling?

A Big Surprise for Many... It Still Exists!

Today – Special Handling FRAGILE Requires a Special Label:

U.S. Postal Service®
INSURED MAIL RECEIPT

DOMESTIC ONLY
Over \$500

OFFICIAL USE

Special Handling, No Fee (check box)	Special Handling, With Fee (check box)
<input type="checkbox"/> Perishable	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile
<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Material Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Live Animal Transportation

Insurance Fee \$
Insurance Coverage \$

Restricted Delivery Fee (endorsement required) \$
Return Receipt Fee (see reverse) \$
Postage \$
Total Postage and Fees \$

Sent To
Street and Apt. No., or PO Box No.
City, State, ZIP+4®

PS Form 3813-P, April 2015 PSN 7530-02-000-9057 See Reverse for Instructions

Special Handling, With Fee (check box)

<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile	\$
<input type="checkbox"/> Live Animal Transportation	\$

Flat Fee: \$9.95
as of 4/10/2016

Label REQUIRED!

U.S. Postal Service®
INSURED MAIL RECEIPT

DOMESTIC ONLY
Over \$500

OFFICIAL USE

Special Handling, No Fee (check box)	Special Handling, With Fee (check box)
<input type="checkbox"/> Perishable	<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile
<input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Material Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Live Animal Transportation

Insurance Fee \$
Insurance Coverage \$

Restricted Delivery Fee (endorsement required) \$
Return Receipt Fee (see reverse) \$
Postage \$
Total Postage and Fees \$

Sent To
Street and Apt. No., or PO Box No.
City, State, ZIP+4®

PS Form 3813-P, April 2015 PSN 7530-02-000-9057 See Reverse for Instructions

Former Insurance Forms
(\$200 threshold):

UNITED STATES
POSTAL SERVICE®

**SPECIAL HANDLING -
FRAGILE**

Label 875, June 2015

But Wait! There's More! As of May 10, 2016:

RETAIL DIGEST
Inform. Engage. Achieve.

show image slideshow

May 10, 2016**Weekly Messages from USPS® Retail Marketing**

Contents

Be sure to share/distribute a copy of this week's Retail Digest to all retail associates as there are actionable items and important information included within the following articles.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 National Retail Performance Update 1

Action Required 2

- Cycle Count Notice – Week 3 ReadyPost® and Expedited Packaging Supplies (EPS) - *Asset Management*

Need to Know 4

- USPS Adds "Special Handling-Fragile" Pre-Inked Stamp – *Shipping Products & Services*

As Information 4

- Delay for Upcoming Price Change Initiatives – *Global Trade Compliance*

Contact Us! 5

Need to Know

Shipping Products & Services

USPS Adds "Special Handling-Fragile" Pre-Inked Stamp

Sales and Service Associates (SSAs) have a new pre-inked stamp to make sure that all "Special Handling-Fragile" packages are correctly identified and receive the special handling for which our customer has paid.

The new "Special Handling-Fragile" pre-inked stamp can be used if the Label 875, *Special Handling-Fragile*, is not available. While SSAs may use either option to identify these mailpieces, any previous "FRAGILE" stamps or stickers should be considered "out of service" and should no longer be used. Writing "fragile" on a package will not suffice.

Mailers requesting "Special Handling-Fragile" service may purchase this Extra Service for an additional fee.

The new stamp is available on eBay2, located at <http://ebuy2.usps.gov/>, under SKU 25118.

**SPECIAL HANDLING
FRAGILE**

For additional information, please click the following link to email the Subject Matter

Expert/Program Manager at ShippingServices@usps.com.

SKU 25118

Quick Chronology...

1925 – Service Introduced - 25¢

1928 – 2nd Printing 25¢ (January)

1928 – Rates Reduced (July)

1928 – 25¢ Recalled (August)

1940 – 2nd Printing 10, 15, 20¢

1948 – Air Parcel Post Service Introduced

1955 – Experimental Dry Printing

1959 – Final Recall from Philatelic Sales


Rates now exceed highest denomination

1968 – Priority Mail Service Introduced

2016 – Special Handling Still Alive and Well

Repurposed to mean “FRAGILE”

Trial Colors Palette from 4th Bureau Stamps

½¢ Hale	Comparable	Color	Scott-Listed Set
Essay Set	Fourth Bureau	Sample	Trial Colors (15)
1¢	Deep Green		LDP - Approved Color
2¢	Carmine		Carmine Lake
3¢	Violet		Not Known
4¢	Yellow Brown		Brown
5¢	Dark Blue		Dark Blue
6¢	Red Orange		Orange
7¢	Black		Black (Alt Script)
8¢	Olive Green		Olive Green
9¢	Rose		Dull Rose
10¢	Orange		Orange Yellow
11¢	Greenish Blue		Light Blue Green
12¢	Brown Violet		Dark Violet Brown
13¢	Apple Green		Apple Green
14¢	Blue		Blue (2015)
15¢	Gray		Gray Black
20¢	Carmine Rose		Carmine Rose (2015)
30¢	Olive Brown		Gray Brown



Carmine (2¢)



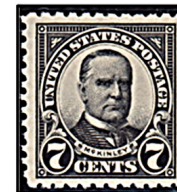
Yellow-Brown (4¢)



Dark Blue (5¢)



Red-Orange (6¢)



Black (7¢)



Olive Green (8¢)



Rose (9¢)



Orange (10¢)



Greenish Blue (11¢)



(Brown Violet 12¢)



Apple Green (13¢)



Blue (14¢)



Gray (15¢)

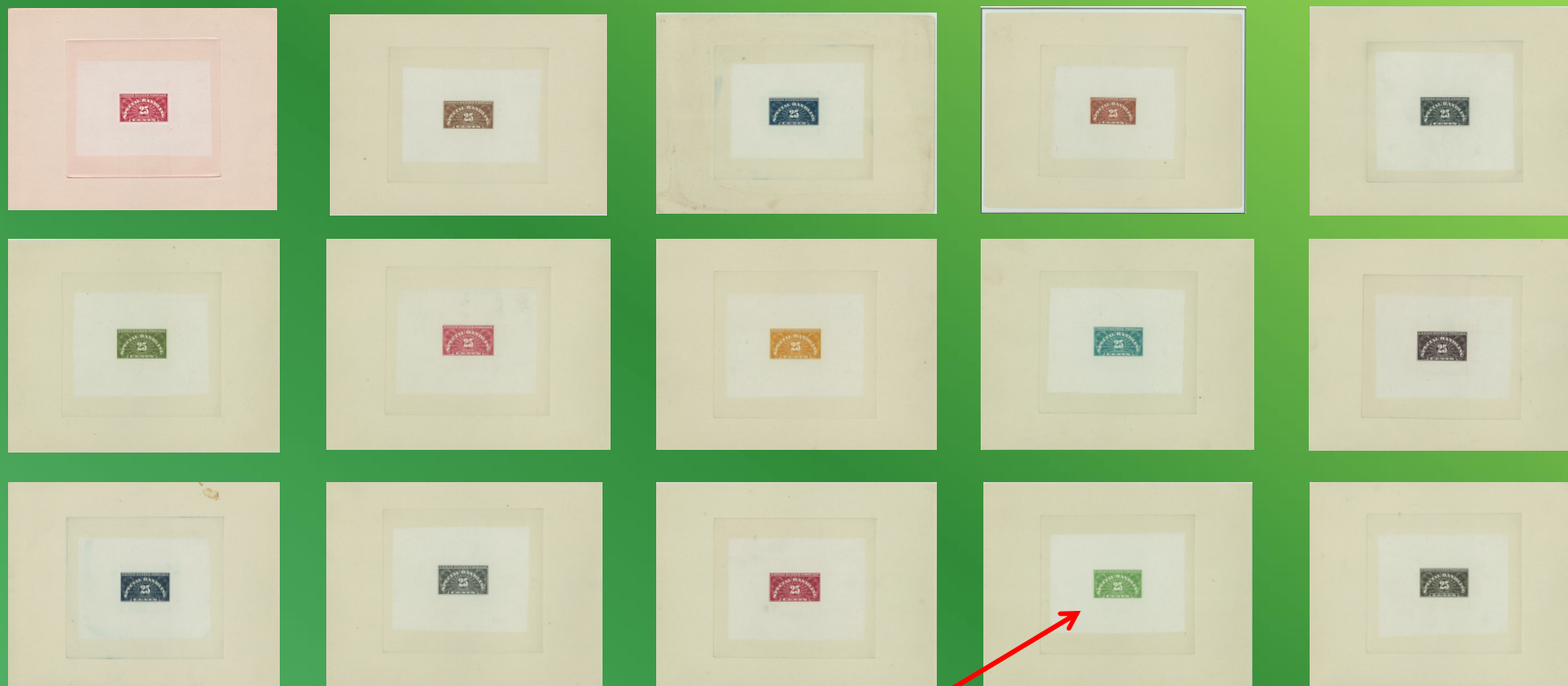


Carmine Rose (20¢)



Olive Brown (30¢)

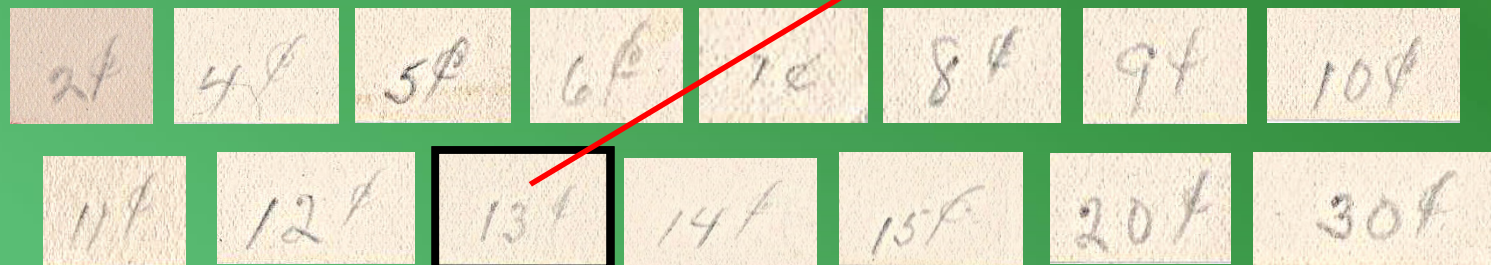
Scott formerly listed a set of 13 – now 15!



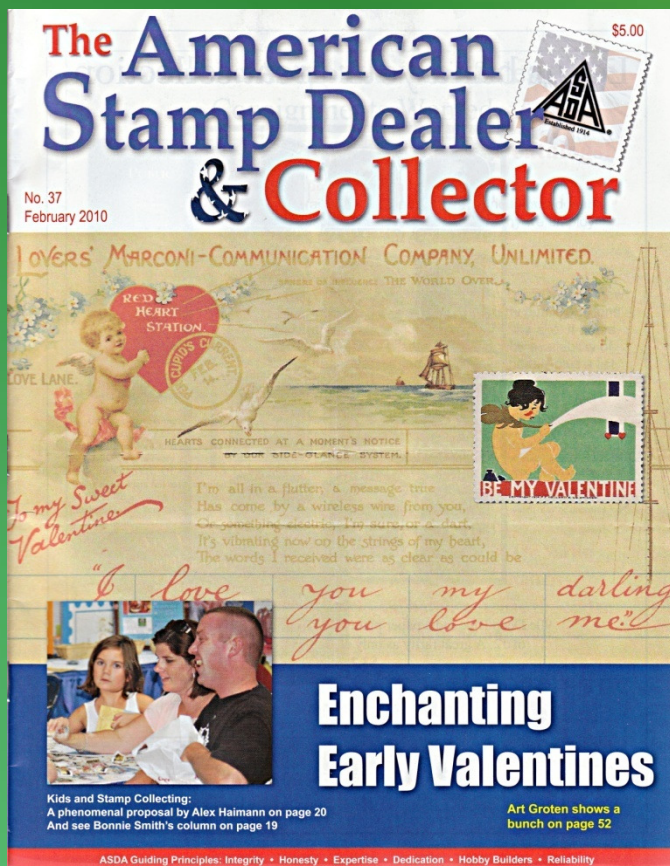
Jan 11, 1926

Some Keys for Research:

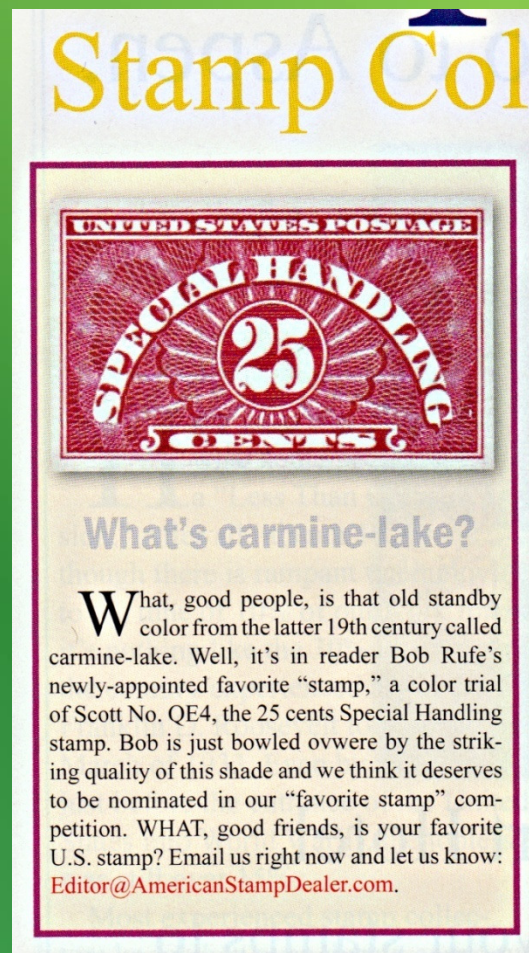
***Pencil on
Reverse!***



My Favorite Stamp...



Page 11



Final Selection: 1¢ Deep Green



Large Die Proof – 7 Reported

Plate Proof from National Postal Museum

- ❖ **200 Subject**
- ❖ **Flat Plate**
- ❖ **Unwatermarked**
- ❖ **Perf. 11 Only**



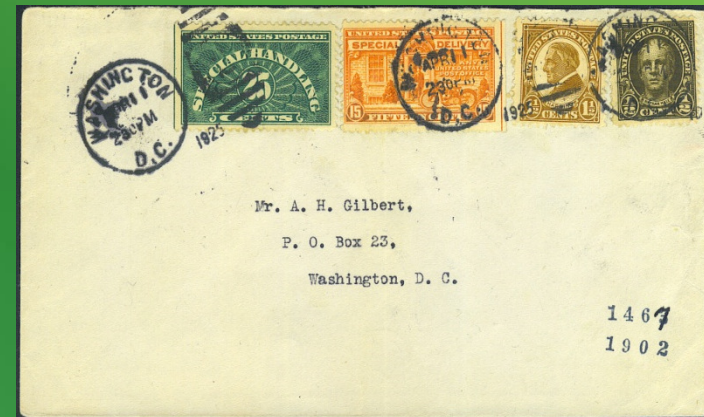
First Day of Issue – April 11, 1925

QE4 Single



\$ 225

QE4 Combo with E13



2016 CV

\$ 1,300

First Day of Issue – Plate Blocks

QE4 Single



\$ 1,093 (2008)

QE4 Combo with E13



\$ 3,575 (2005)

Auctions

First Printings – 25¢ Stamps

1925 Deep – Green



\$37.50

1928 Yellow - Green



\$ 32.50

Mint, NH (2016 CV)

Two “Major” Plate Varieties (Catalog-Listed)

Normal Stamp



\$37.50

“A-T” in STATES



Mint, NH (2013 CV)

\$140

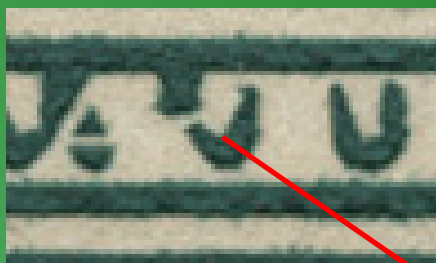
“T-A” in POSTAGE



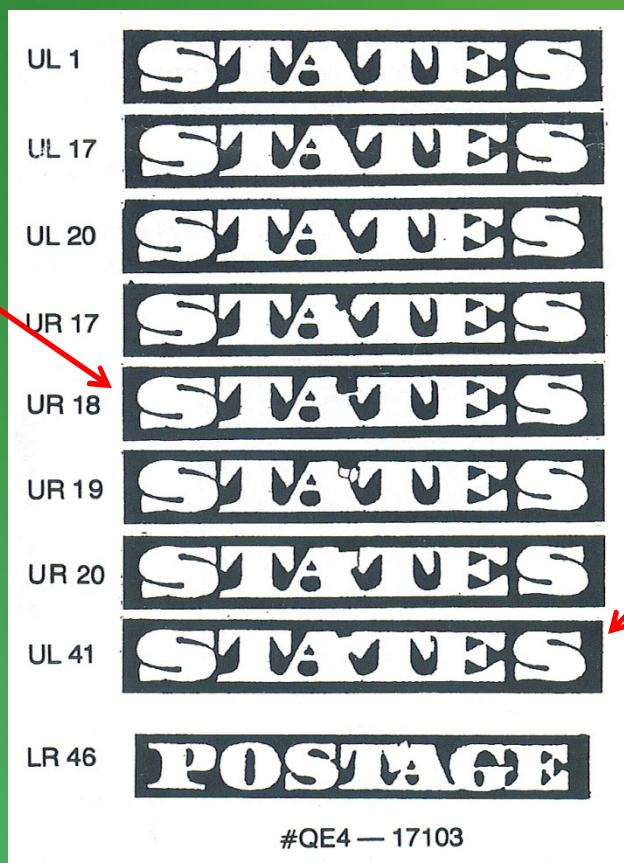
\$210

Several “Minor” Plate Varieties (Not Catalog-Listed)

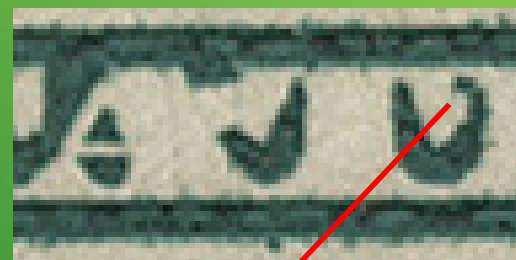
“A-T” Reaching



“Cloudy” French Summary



Broken “T”

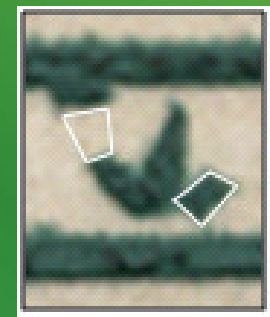


New Plate Variety Discovered in 2008

Normal “A-T” Break



New Discovery: “Dot on the T”



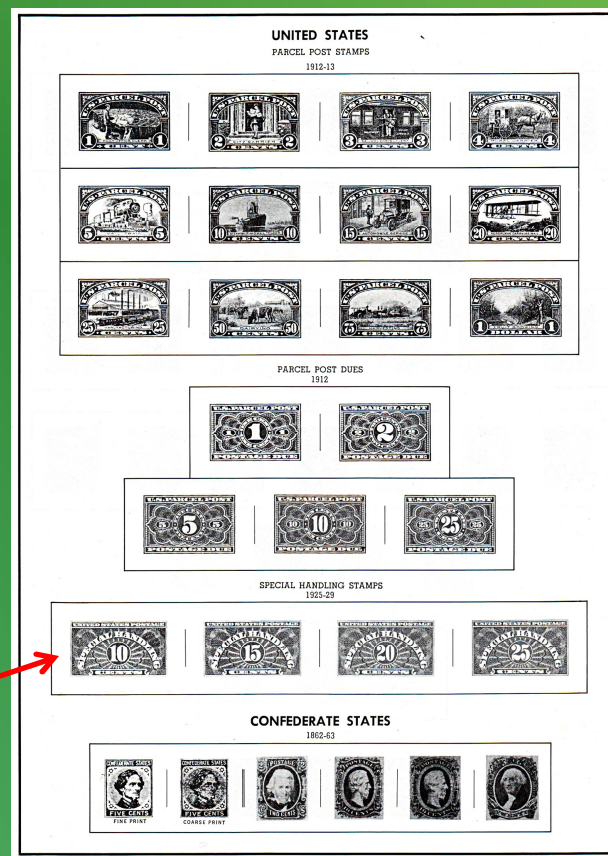
Alternate Title...

“That’s Like What? Four Stamps??”

A Typical
Album Page...

stamps most of
you will
recognize...

SPECIAL HANDLING STAMPS
1925-29



“What an Album Page Should Look Like!”

My Album Page



1928 Yellow-Green 25¢ Printing

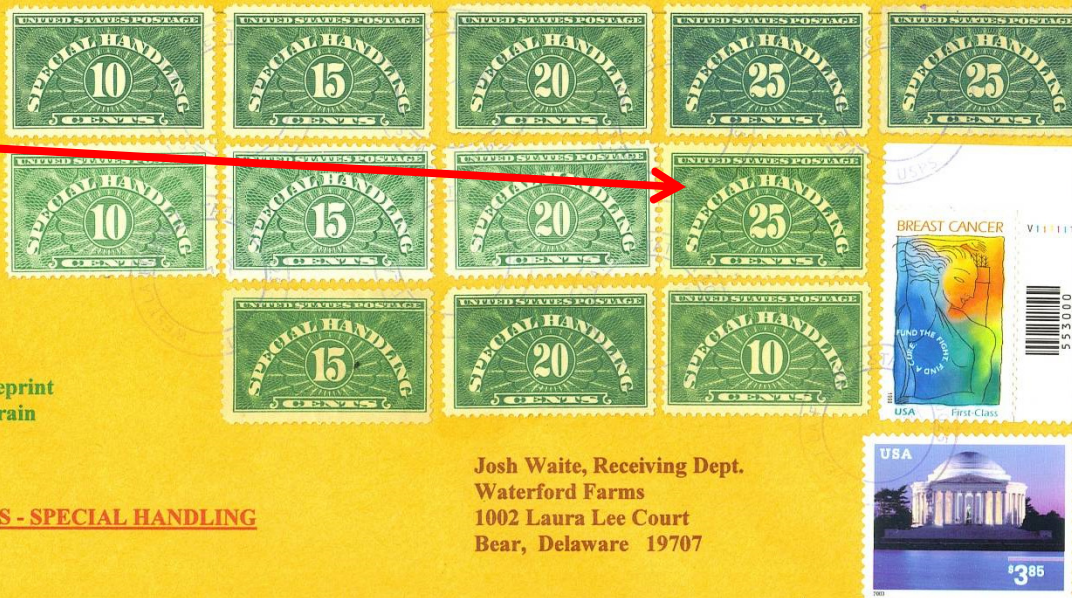


Christopher J. O'Donnell
Loyola Poultry Group
1901 Venice Blvd,
Los Angeles, CA 90006

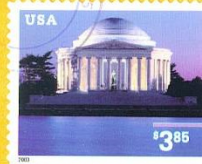
DO NOT BEND

Top Row: Wet Printings w/ "A-T"
2nd Row : Dry Printings + 25 ct Reprint
3rd Row : Wet Printing – Cross Grain

FIRST CLASS - SPECIAL HANDLING



Josh Waite, Receiving Dept.
Waterford Farms
1002 Laura Lee Court
Bear, Delaware 19707



Used Examples are Scarce... “Unknown on Cover!”
(except for a few modern contrived pieces, until...)

“Unknown on Cover...” ‘til February, 2011!



THIS LETTER HAS BEEN DELAYED FOR ONE YEAR
BECAUSE OF DIFFICULTIES IN TRANSPORTATION
AT LITTLE AMERICA, ANTARCTICA.

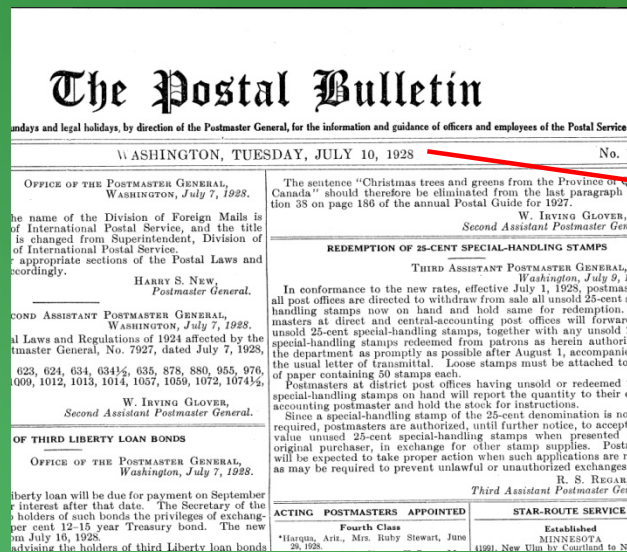
New EDU for stamp:

May 1928



1928 Printing – Why so rare (on cover)?

July 10, 1928 Withdrawal & Redemption Notice:



THIRD ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL,
Washington, July 9, 1928.

In conformance to the new rates, effective July 1, 1928, postmasters at all post offices are directed to withdraw from sale all unsold 25-cent special-handling stamps now on hand and hold same for redemption. Postmasters at direct and central-accounting post offices will forward their unsold 25-cent special-handling stamps, together with any unsold 25-cent special-handling stamps redeemed from patrons as herein authorized, to the department as promptly as possible after August 1, accompanied with the usual letter of transmittal. Loose stamps must be attached to sheets of paper containing 50 stamps each.

Postmasters at district post offices having unsold or redeemed 25-cent special-handling stamps on hand will report the quantity to their central-accounting postmaster and hold the stock for instructions.

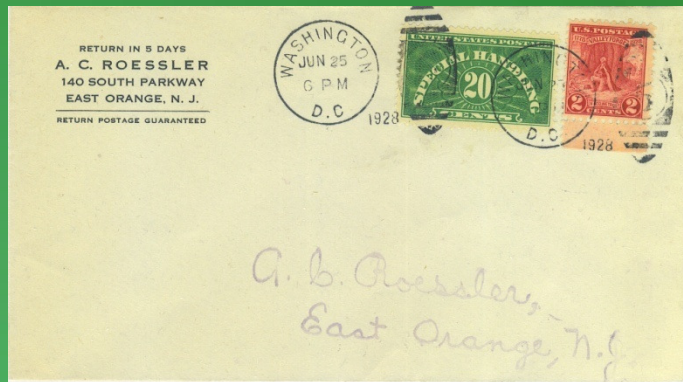
Since a special-handling stamp of the 25-cent denomination is no longer required, postmasters are authorized, until further notice, to accept at full value unused 25-cent special-handling stamps when presented by the original purchaser, in exchange for other stamp supplies. Postmasters will be expected to take proper action when such applications are received as may be required to prevent unlawful or unauthorized exchanges.

R. S. REGAR,
Third Assistant Postmaster General.

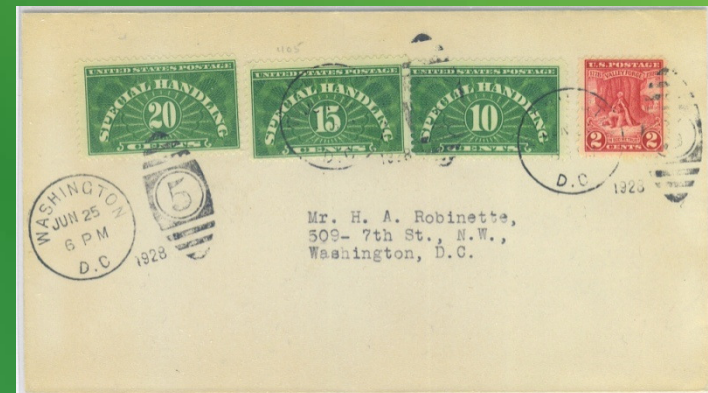
Printed in January – Withdrawn/Redeemed in July!

New (Lower) Rates Introduced FDC - June 25, 1928

Uncacheted



Combo – QE1, QE2 & QE3



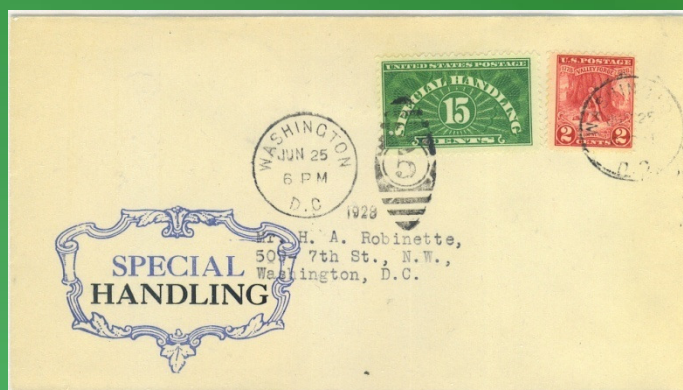
Catalog Value (2013)

\$ 45

\$ 350

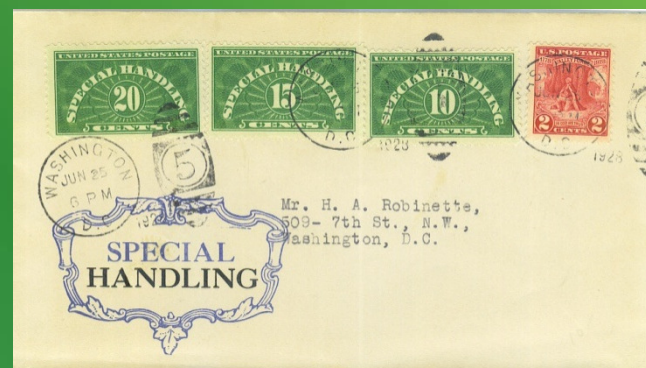
FDCs with Cachets...

With Cachet



\$ 200

Combo – QE1, QE2 & QE3



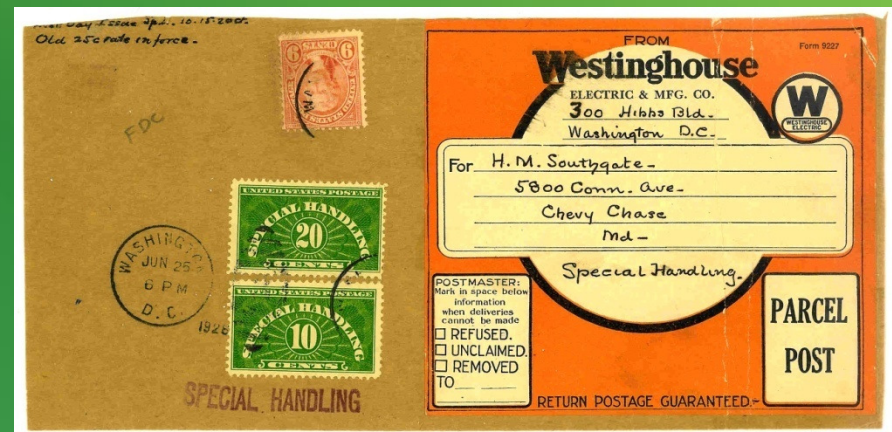
Not Priced

Catalog Value 2016

My Favorite FDCs...

The Hugh M. Southgate Covers*

The New Rates Didn't Take Effect Until July 1, 1928

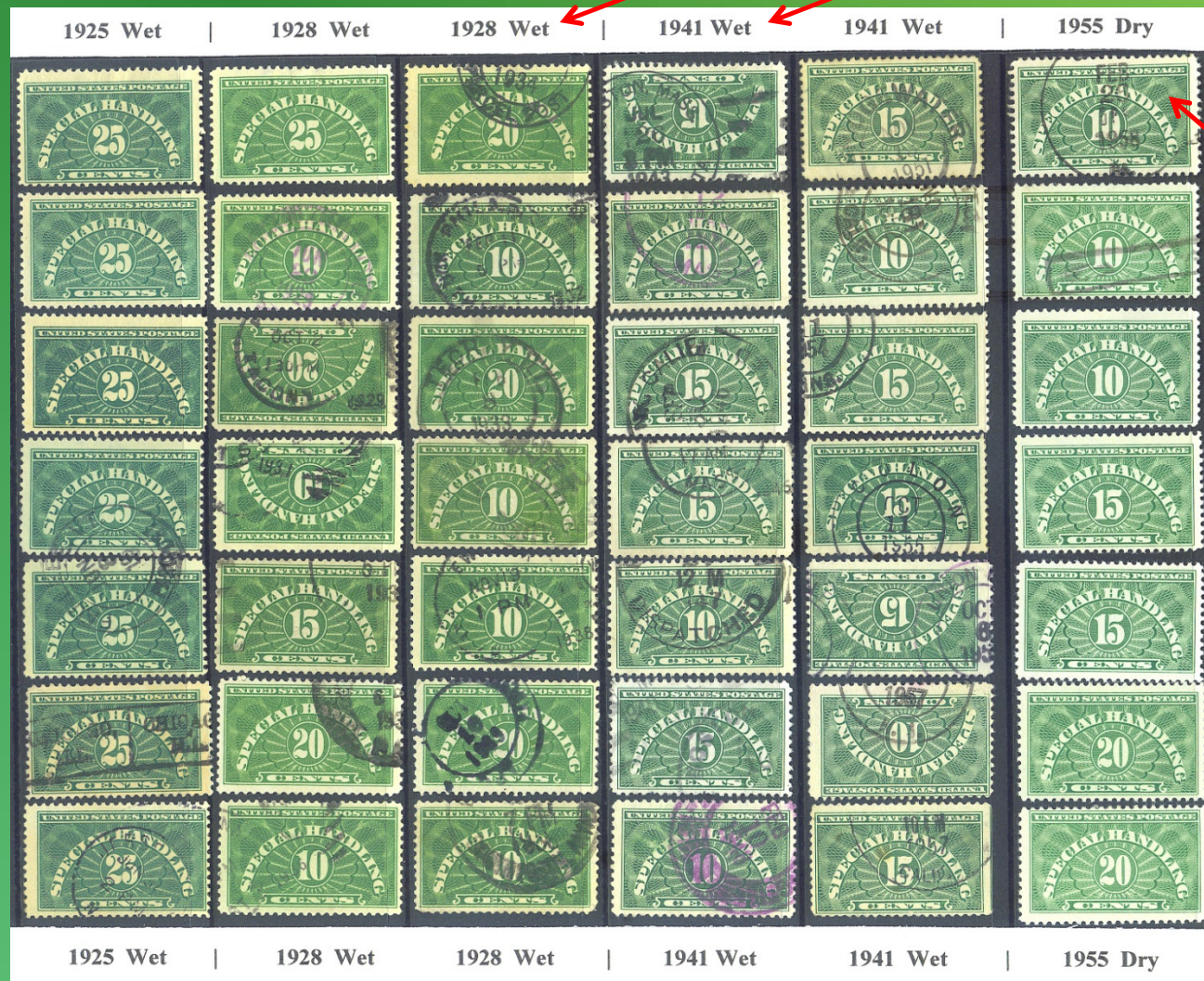


And of course, they rate out perfectly!

* Photo scans courtesy of Henry Scheuer

History of Printing... 1 2

... As learned through “socked on the nose” cancels:



**Certified
EDU!**

Paper Study Results

“Wet” vs. “Dry” Paper



1928 Wet



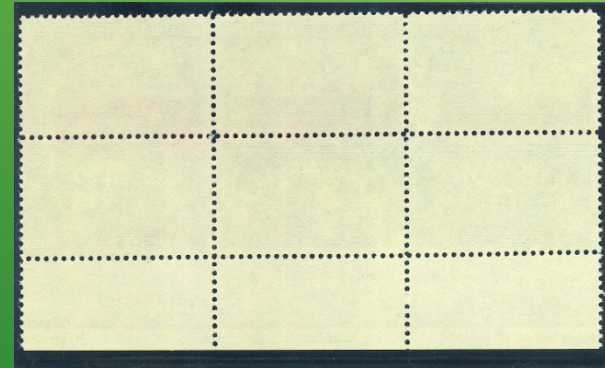
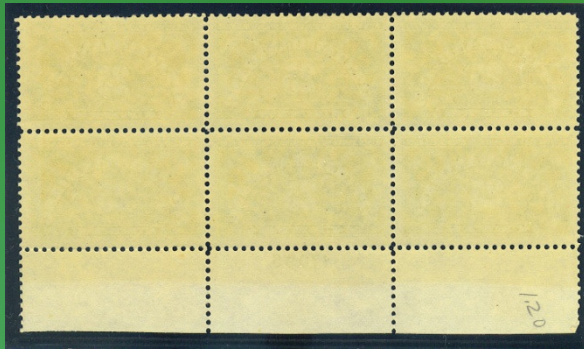
1940 Wet



1955 Dry

1955 Experimental Printing

“Wet” vs. “Dry” Paper



1955 Experimental Printing

Rarity only recently recognized...



American Philatelic Society
Expert Committee Report

Members of the American Philatelic Expertizing Service have examined the item submitted and it is their opinion that it is:

United States, Scott No. QE1 dry print, used 2/26/1958, EDU as of certificate date, genuine in all respects. (Revised Scott No. QE1a 11/12/2007)



No. 169823
Date: 6/19/2006

The American Philatelic Expertizing Service
A Service to Philately Since 1903
109 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823 USA
Phone: 814-933-3803 • Fax: 814-933-6128
Website: www.stamps.org

apex

A cooperative service offered by the American Philatelic Society (APS) and the American Stamp Dealers Association (ASDA).

EDU Above; Six examples known!

1955 Experimental Printing

All used stamps had the same Catalog Value:
(and the nomenclature was backwards)

320

PARCEL POST POSTAGE DUE STAMPS — SPECIAL HANDLING STAMPS — POSTAL INSURANCE STAMPS

2007

SPECIAL HANDLING STAMPS

The Postal Service Act, approved February 28, 1925, provided for a special handling stamp of the 25-cent denomination for use on fourth-class mail matter, which would secure for such mail matter the expeditious handling accorded to mail matter of the first class.



PP13

FLAT PLATE PRINTING

Plates of 200 subjects in four panes of 50

1925-55	Unwmk.	Perf. 11
QE1 PP13 10c yellow green, 1955	2.00	1.00
Never hinged	3.50	
Block of 4	8.50	5.75
P# block of 6	32.50	
Never hinged	47.50	
a. Wet printing, June 25, 1928	2.50	1.00
Never hinged	4.25	
P# block of 6	22.50	

Never hinged	32.50	
First day cover	45.00	
QE2 PP13 15c yellow green, 1955	2.10	.90
Never hinged	3.60	
Block of 4	8.75	5.75
P# block of 6	42.50	
Never hinged	62.50	
a. Wet printing, June 25, 1928	2.75	.90
Never hinged	4.50	
P# block of 6	32.50	
Never hinged	47.50	

QE4 PP13 25c yellow green, 1929	18.00	7.50
Never hinged	32.50	
Block of 4	85.00	32.50
P# block of 6	260.00	
Never hinged	375.00	
a. 25c deep green, Apr. 11, 1925	30.00	5.50
Never hinged	50.00	
First day cover		225.00
Block of 4	130.00	30.00
P# block of 6	330.00	
Never hinged	475.00	

QE3 PP

QE3 PP13 20c yellow green, 1955

Never hinged	3.25	1.50
Block of 4	5.25	
P# block of 6	14.50	11.00
Never hinged	47.50	
Never hinged	70.00	
a. Wet printing, June 25, 1928	4.50	1.50
Never hinged	7.75	
P# block of 6	37.50	
Never hinged	55.00	
First day cover		45.00
First day cover, Nos. QE1a-QE3a		350.00

1955 Experimental Printing

Catalog numbers changed; used dry-prints not priced.

2008

SPECIAL HANDLING STAMPS — POSTAL INSURANCE STAMPS

333

SPECIAL HANDLING STAMPS

The Postal Service Act, approved February 28, 1925, provided for a special handling stamp of the 25-cent denomination for use on fourth-class mail matter, which would secure for such mail matter the expeditious handling accorded to mail matter of the first class.



PP13

FLAT PLATE PRINTING

Plates of 200 subjects in four panes of 50

1925-55	Unwmk.	Perf. 11
QE1 PP13 10c yellow green, wet printing,		
June 25, 1928	2.50	1.00
Never hinged	4.25	—
Block of 4	10.50	—
P# block of 6	25.00	—
Never hinged	40.00	—
First day cover	45.00	—
a. Dry printing, 1955	3.75	—
Never hinged	6.50	—
Block of 4	16.00	—
P# block of 6	40.00	—
Never hinged	65.00	—
QE2 PP13 15c yellow green, wet printing,		
June 25, 1928	3.00	.90
Never hinged	5.00	—
Block of 4	12.50	—
P# block of 6	30.00	—
Never hinged	47.50	—

First day cover	45.00
a. Dry printing, 1955	5.00
Never hinged	8.00
Block of 4	21.00
P# block of 6	50.00
Never hinged	75.00
QE3 PP13 20c yellow green, wet printing,	
June 25, 1928	4.50 1.50
Never hinged	7.75
Block of 4	19.00
P# block of 6	37.50
Never hinged	60.00
First day cover	45.00
First day cover, No. QE3	350.00
a. Dry printing, 1955	7.50
Never hinged	12.50
Block of 4	32.50
P# block of 6	57.50
Never hinged	85.00



AT" joined a

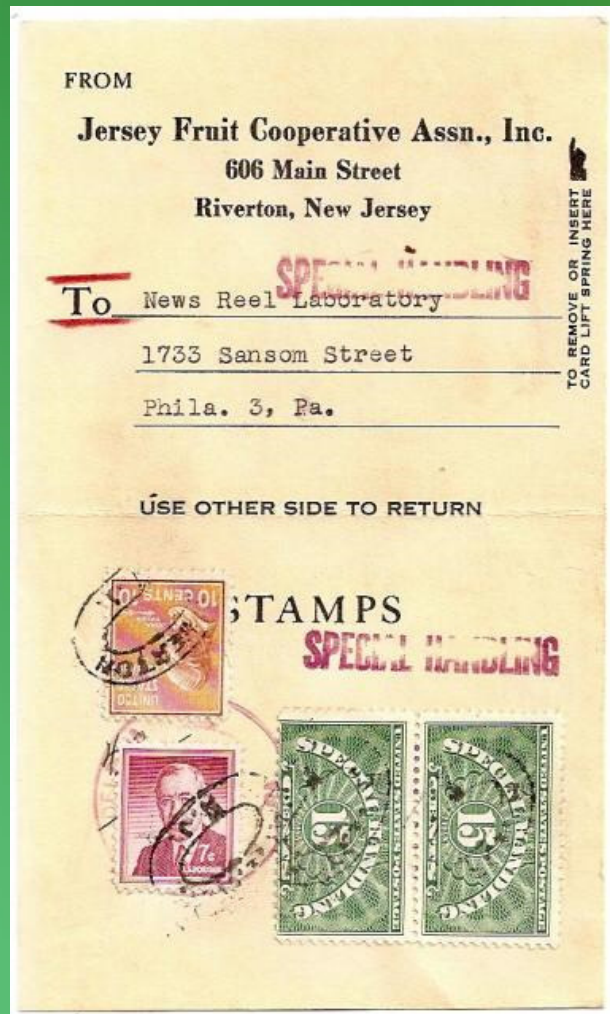


Never hinged	75.00
QE3 PP13 20c yellow green, wet printing,	
June 25, 1928	4.50 1.50
Never hinged	7.75
Block of 4	19.00
P# block of 6	37.50
Never hinged	60.00
First day cover	45.00
First day cover, Nos. QE1- QE3	350.00
a. Dry printing, 1955	7.50
Never hinged	12.50
Block of 4	32.50
P# block of 6	57.50
Never hinged	85.00

Photos added.

1955 Experimental Printing

Rare used; Not known on cover!



“WANTED – Dead or Alive!”

\$300.00 REWARD!

THESE ARE WET-PRINT!





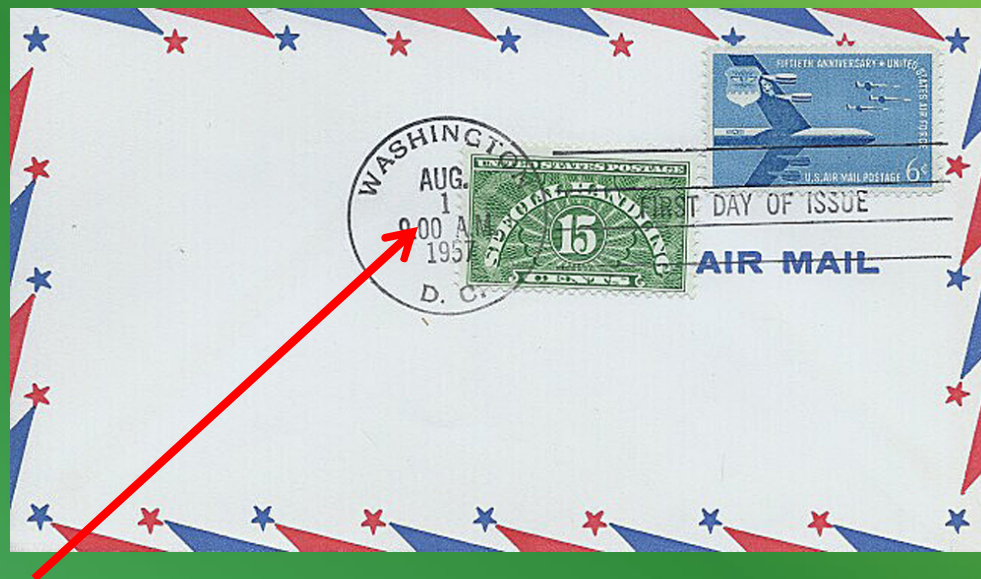
U.S. SPECIAL HANDLING DRY-PRINT
ON COMMERCIAL COVER
DATED CANCEL BEFORE 1970

ANY 25¢ ON COVER WITH...
“LIVE CHICKS!”
(OR BEES OR ALLIGATORS!)

CONTACT: BOB RUFÉ - RRUFE1@AOL.COM - 302 - 354 - 8582 (CELL)

Special Handling - Rarest Modern Covers?

Dry Print Unknown on Cover... until September, 2010!



**New EDU for cover:
August 1, 1957**

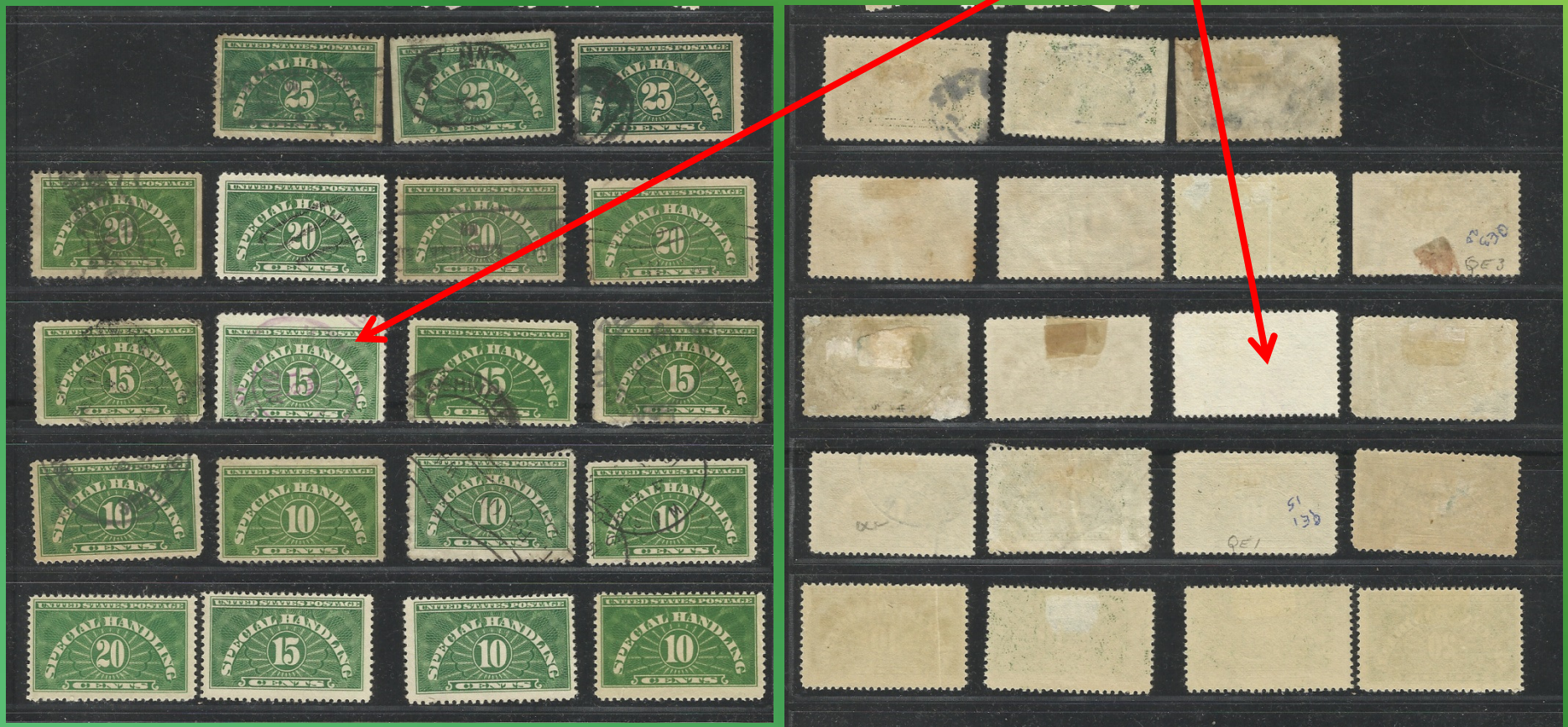
**Unaddressed
Uncacheted**

eBay Stories... This EDU was listed for \$9.95...

Where do you get all this stuff?

How about eBay???

AUG 31 1957



Details, details!

“USA USED SOME MINT SPECIAL HANDLING QE 1-4 with back scan 0913309”

Description

Seller assumes all responsibility for this listing.

Seller Notes: “used some mint”

kissaneg

[Add this store to favorites](#) | [Sign up for newsletter](#)

Search Store

see scans

Ain't Ebay Great???

AOL Read - Google Chrome

mail.aol.com/38079-111/aol-6/en-us/mail/DisplayMessage.aspx?ws_popup=true

KEEP AS NEW REPLY REPLY ALL FORWARD ACTION DELETE SPAM

Your invoice for eBay purchases: USA USED SOME MINT SPECIAL HANDLING QE 1-4 with back scan 0913309 (131007631775#)

From eBay ebay@ebay.com [hide details](#)

To rrufe1rrufe1@aol.com

Mon, Oct 7, 2013 7:54 pm

Invoice

Dear roofertoo,

[Pay Now](#)

Thank you for shopping on eBay! Your total amount due is \$8.65. More details about your purchase are included below.

Item #	Item Title	Quantity	Price	Amount
131007631775	USA USED SOME MINT SPECIAL HANDLING QE 1-4 with back scan 0913309	1	\$7.99	\$7.99


Subtotal: \$7.99

Shipping and handling via USPS First Class Package: \$0.66

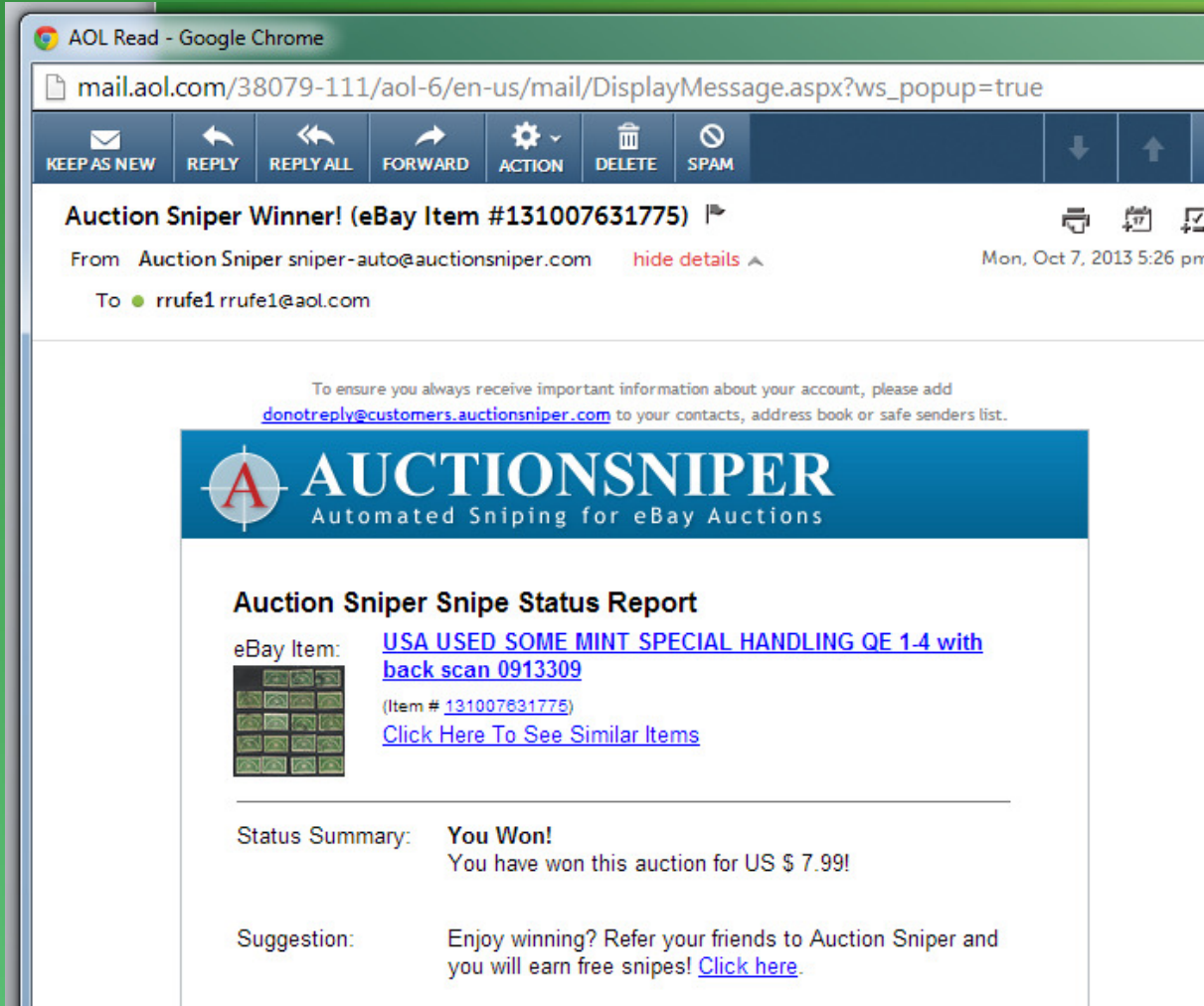
Total: \$8.65

NEED HEALTH INSURANCE INFO?

Get information on your new health insurance options.



Don't forget Auction Sniper!



3 Reasons:
Convenience.
Discipline.
Competitive Advantage.

(My Bid: \$65!)

How about BidStart???









28 April 2012!!!

AOL Mail (214) x US #QE1-3 F-VF Used CV \$3 x

stampwants-stamps.bidstart.com/US-QE1-3-F-VF-Used-CV-3-40-21041-/26868410/a.html

AOL.com - News, S... My eBay Selling Snipe It Now Sam Houston Philat... Wells Fargo PayPal 14 Timeless Ways to... Stamps

More Special Handling Items from All Sellers


 United States Scott # F1, used \$3 ⁰⁰	 US Scott# QE1-4a MNH VF \$9 ⁹⁵	 Qe3 Mog F/VF BB-SL \$1 ⁸⁰	 Scott # FA1 unused NH Plate #25179 LL Certified Mail \$0.45	 US QE3 Graded VF-XF 85 NH PSE 2006 \$12 ⁰⁰	 #QE1 VF+ OG NH, fresh \$7 ⁷⁰	 QE1 MNH Very Fine Plus C830 \$2 ⁷⁵	 Qe4 Used F/Vf BB-SL \$2
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US #QE1-3 F-VF Used CV \$3.40 (21041) Item # 26868410
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Congratulations! You've won this item and already paid for it.
To check or update the Paid and Received status of this listing, as well as Leave Feedback or contact the seller, please go to the Items I've Won section of the [My bidStart area](#).

Click the Image Below for a Larger View





Current Bid **\$0.68** Convert Currency
Time Left **Closed** (Sat Apr-28-12 12:58:18 EDT)

Winner **snowyowl (34)**
Bid History **1 bid view history**



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Exhibit Page – 2011 vs. 2012



New Discovery 2012 – Layout Dot

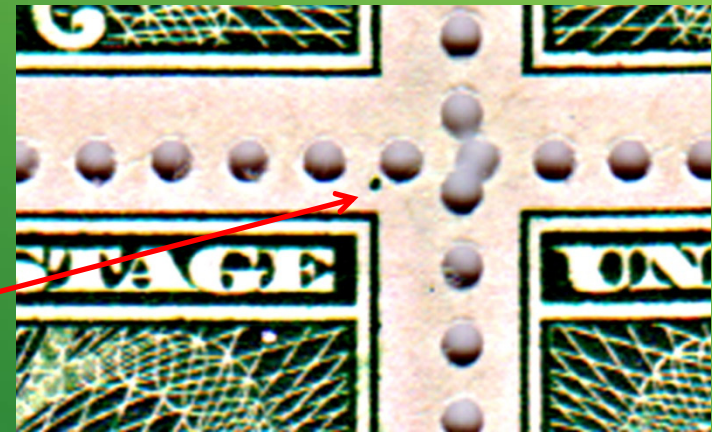
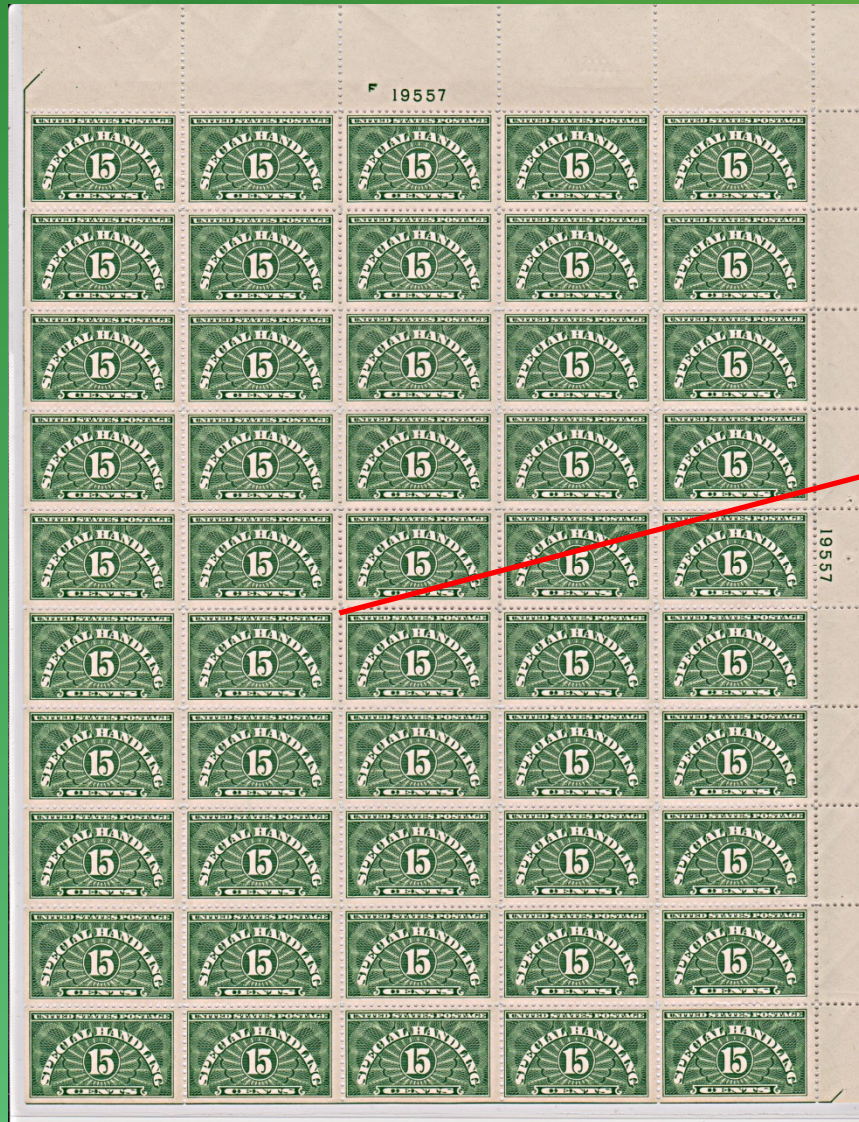
**“A constant variety from plate 19557 at position UR 27 (57th subject on the plate), confirmed by examination of the plate proof”
- George Edman -**



Guilty Pleasures... for Research!

<u>INVENTORY OF WET- & DRY-PRINTINGS</u>		
QE Sheets	Wet Print	Dry Print
19553	UL*,UL(+FD*),UR(2),LL(2),LR(2)	UL*, UR, LL, LR(2)
19554	UL, UR(3){PPF}, LR(3)	UL,UR,LL(4),LR(2)
19555	UL (2), UR, LL, LR	
19556	UL, UR, LL, LR(3)	
19557	UL(2+FD(2)), UR*, LL, LR	UL, LL, LR
19558	UL, UR, LL, LL, LR	UL, LL, LR
19559	UL, UR, LL(4%), LR	UL, UR, LL, LR
19560	UL, UR, LL, LR	UL, UR, LL, LR
19541	UL(2), LL* (+FD), LR	UL, UR, LR
19542	UL(2), LL (+FD), LR	UL
19543	UL, UL, UR, LL, LR	LR
19544	UL, UR, LL, LR	UL, UR, LL, LR(2)
17095	LL* (Yel-Grn)	5/23/2016
17098	LR (Yel-Grn)	
17103	UL* (Deep Grn)	RRufe1@aol.com
* selvage missing	* layout dot; % one has crease	* in exhibit
1928 WET	45 OF 48 (+23)	31 OF 48 (+6)

So... I just happen to have...



... and in my stash, 3 more!



What did you learn... ???

- **Dry Prints are rare, used;**
- **Layout Dot variety is also rare!**
- **Together???
(\$450 Offer Rejected!)**



“EFO’s” :

**Some Dramatic
“Freaks”... :**



... and Only One Known Error for Issue:



Some Closing Thoughts...

A Common Stamp – Pursued by a “Beginner”

Some Lucky Finds –

**No one had previously looked at
“The Whole Issue”**

Rarities:

There is only one set of Trial Color Proofs!

Dry Prints – 10 & 20 ¢ Not Known on Cover

Rare Used – 20 ¢ Only One Known

The June 1928 Printing - on Special Booklet Paper

Is there a 25¢ on a Chick or Bee Wrapper?

Conclusions...

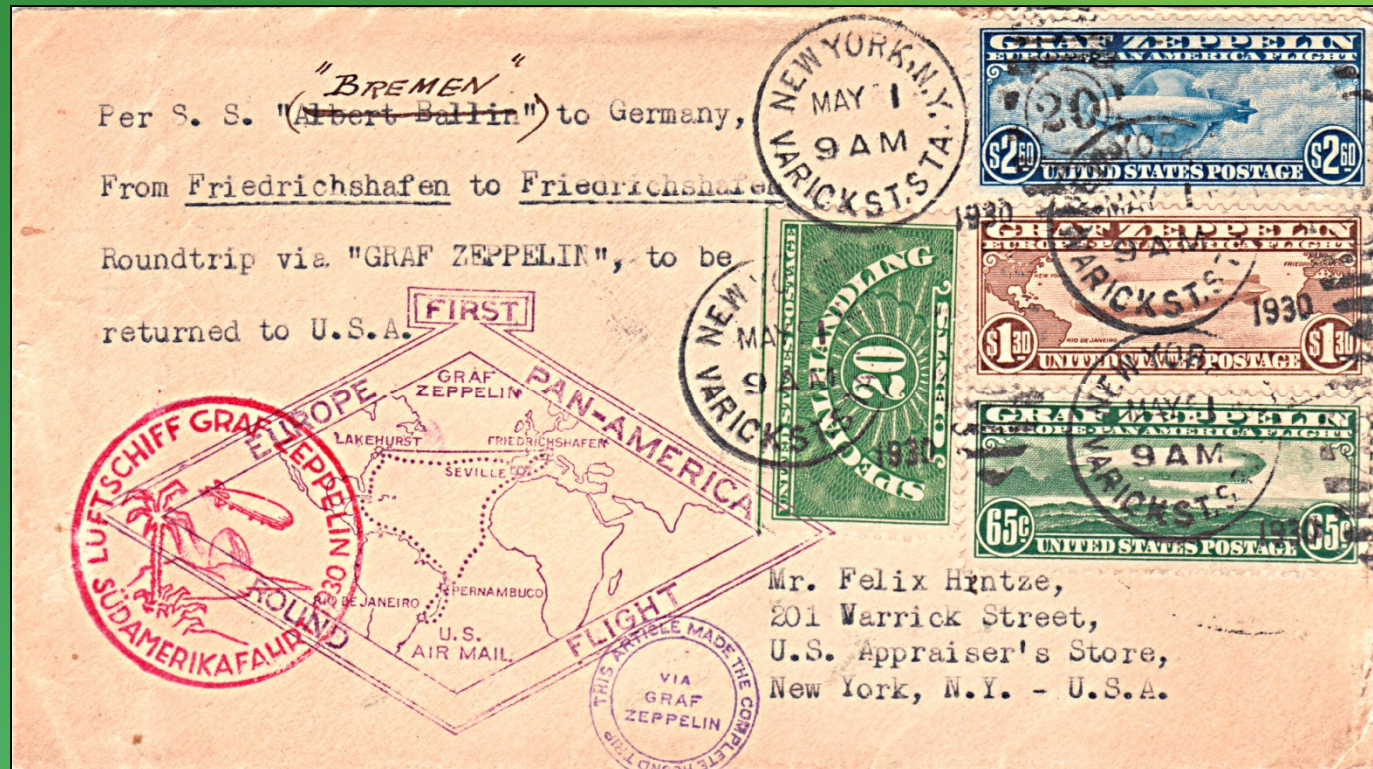
Special Handling evolved over its first thirty years

**Never Promoted as a “Prioritization” Service
Care Exercised that “Lives” Survive;
Evolved for “Special Handling” of Liquids,
Fragile & Perishable Items**

**Air Parcel Post and Priority Mail Stressed “Speed,”
not Care**

**Special Handling now in a niche where many
have believed it existed all along**

Zeppelin to South America!



Special Handling neither authorized nor intended (but "permitted")
What in the world was the sender thinking? Was he thinking of me?