



Postmark Atlanta
Atlanta Stamp Collector's Club



#0357-031583

August 2020 Newsletter

As we emailed earlier, meetings are not being held until the public health danger is past. I've included many ways to connect with other stamp collectors online in this newsletter.

I hope some of you have taken advantage of the Stamp Chats on You Tube.

We hope our meeting location JavaVino will continue to be in business so we can continue our meetings there whenever it is safe to do so. Java Vino is only open for pick up in the morning but they are still roasting coffee so if you enjoyed the coffee you tried there try ordering from their web-site or contact them at info@javavino.com. If you would like to support their Coffee Roasting business you can contact them at 404-577-8673 or use this link to order beans online for delivery. <https://javavino-online-orders.square.site/>

Many Collecting Avenues for the 3-cent Washington of the Large Bank Note Series **By Steve Swain**

A few years ago, I purchased a stack of covers all franked with the 3-cent Washington issue of the Large Bank Notes series. It is a classic U.S. issue for sure and has always been one of my favorite U.S. stamps. Washington's portrait is based on a life-size sculpture by Jean-Antoine Houdon residing in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.

My initial attraction for the covers being offered were the fancy cancels that had been applied to many of the stamps. I had never really researched the 3-cent Washington until recently and was pleasantly surprised with my findings about the many characteristics and collecting avenues other than fancy cancels for the Large Bank Notes, especially the 3-cent Washington.

The 1870-1888 Bank Notes

The 1870-1888 Bank Notes series of U.S. stamps is sometimes called the complex Large Bank Notes. The "large" characterization is understood by the stamps' contrast to its successor issues of 1890-1893, called the Small Bank Notes. Those stamps are noticeably smaller in size, a somewhat more appropriate, common size for U.S. definitives. The "complex" characterization of the Large Bank Notes series reflects two elements. First, the 1870-1888 stamps were printed by the National, Continental and American Bank Note Companies, whereas the 1890-1893 stamps were printed only by the American Bank Note Company. Secondly, and as a result of the first

element, the Large Bank Notes have numerous varieties, secret marks, papers, grills, re- engravings and special printings, all of which do not apply to the simpler Small Bank Notes series except for a very few varieties of those stamps. Include with the Large Bank Notes the many fancy cancels used during that time and collecting Large Bank Notes can be an extensive and entertaining pursuit.

The 3-cent Washington

During the eighteen years the Large Bank Notes were issued, the 3-cent Washington was printed eight times. Since first-class letter postage at that time was three cents, the George Washington issue satisfying that rate was truly the “workhorse” stamp for many years. As such, there are millions of examples of several colors, with and without secret marks or grills, printed on soft vs. hard paper, porous vs. coarse paper, etc. Here are a few examples of the collecting avenues for the 3-cent Washington.

Colors

Given that three companies printed the 3-cent Washington, it is not surprising to know that there are several shades of green of the stamps up until 1887 when the final issue was printed using a vermillion hue. The non-vermillion shades include green, blue green, pale green, deep green, yellow green. Below shows several stamps with green shades and one with vermillion.



Green

Pale Green

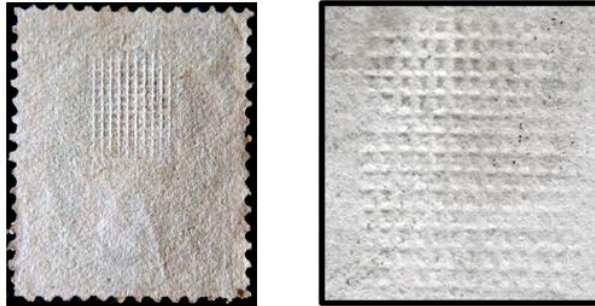
Blue Green

Vermillion (final issue)

Grills

An intriguing collecting characteristic of the 3-cent Washington is its grill. Grills were developed in an attempt to prevent the reuse of stamps after cancellation ink had been removed. Grills are an embossing applied to the paper on which stamps are printed. Using a roller that is pitted with the necessary depressions, a grill is cut into, embossed onto the paper so that the paper fiber is broken. The grills then allow the cancellation ink to be absorbed into the paper and, presumably, prevent the ink from being removed.

The first issue of the 3-cent Washington in 1870, Scott 136, was printed with a grill by the National Bank Note Company. But the National company removed the grill with the second issue of 1870-71. The several varieties of grills are identified by letters of the alphabet. The grill applied to the 1870 3-cent Washington issue is the H grill. Seen below on the left is the reverse of an 1870 3-cent Washington showing the H grill in relation to the stamp’s size. The image on the right shows an enlargement of the grill.



Secret Marks

Beginning in 1873, the Continental Bank Note Company was engaged to print the Large Bank Note stamps. Continental used the same fundamental designs as the 1870-71 stamps but added secret marks. Not really overly “secret”, these were tiny reference points engraved in the designs to differentiate them from the originals done by the National Bank Note Company. For example, the 1-cent Franklin printed by Continental has a small crescent visible in the pearl at the left of the numeral “1” (below left image). The secret mark on the 3-cent Washington is in the form a darker shading under the end of the ribbon below the word “THREE” in the lower left corner of the stamp (below right image). These stamps are plentiful and catalog around 50 cents used.



Fancy Cancels

Geometrics, grids, stars, triangles, figures, targets, starbursts, Maltese crosses, letters, numbers and Masonic triangles. All are fancy cancels, many of which have adorned stamps in the Large Bank Note series, especially the 3-cent Washington. From the 50+ covers I purchased, below are a few fancy cancels from that set. Left to right: target, geometric, star, geometric.



Updates from GwinnPex Show.

Because the August GwinnPex show was cancelled due to Covid-19 Allen has forwarded to us a listing of those dealers who do internet sales.

Ron Alfin WWW.apcstamps.com Ebay seller name ro-alfi

Dave Flannery Ebay store <https://www.ebay.com/str/collectorclassics>

Drew Fountain Ebay seller name: drewfgs

Len Curtis len@collect'emall

Don LaBerteaux Ebay seller name: gastampman
Ebay store <https://www.ebay.com/str/georgiageneralstore>

Allen Johnson FaceBook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2125202764429356/>

Dennis Kowski lists on eBay and Hipstamp.
Seller name for BOTH sites is: dmkcollstamps
Dennis Kowski, DMK Collectibles, 678-488-4692

Since the Great American Stamp Show scheduled for August was cancelled, the three organizations have been working to create a FREE Virtual Stamp Show.



<https://stamps.org/news/c/news/cat/news/post/introducing-the-virtual-stamp-show-free-registration-open-now>

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