The Milwaukee Match Stamps of Greenleaf & Company
A Scarce RO102e on Experimental Silk Paper

Brief History and Examination of Paper

by Charles J. DiComo, PhD

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Greenleaf & Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

- In 1844, the Match Company that became Greenleaf & Co. was founded in Milwaukee, Wisconsin by Robert Pierce.
- In 1860 it was sold to Messrs. Ball, Hill & Greenleaf, which, by 1865 was known as Greenleaf & Company. They issued a number of private die proprietary stamps to meet their needs:
  - #RO100 - 1¢ Green, issued Oct. 1864–Jul. 1873: 12,068,849 on old paper & 5,449,019 on silk.
  - #RO101 - 3¢ Carmine, issued Nov. 1864–Dec. 1872: 4,319,904 on old paper & 1,107,202 on silk.
  - #RO102 - 5¢ Orange, issued Nov. 1864–Aug. 1872: 1,096,032 on old paper & 68,000 on silk. This is the only 5¢ private die proprietary match stamp and was for use on packages of 500 matches.

- In 1870, some private die proprietary stamps were printed on Experimental Silk paper, which exhibit minute pieces of blue or red silk thread widely scattered within the paper, sometimes only one fiber.

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The 5¢ Orange Greenleaf on Experimental Silk Paper

5¢ Orange, central image of a Phoenix rising from the flames, flanked by the numeral of value 5. A curved label across the top bears the firms name with MILWAUKEE, WIS. on a ribbon just below, and at the bottom is found MATCHES over U.S. INTER. REV. Straight margin labels at the side read FIVE and CENTS. Engraved & printed by Butler and Carpenter, Philadelphia PA as a horizontal rectangle of 170 stamps per sheet 10 x 17, from 1864 through 1872.

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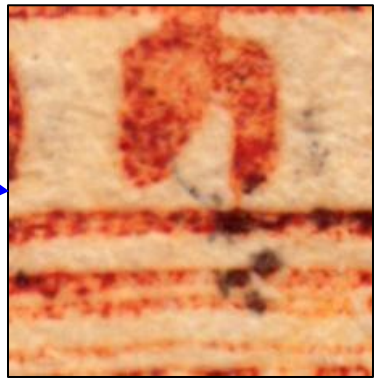
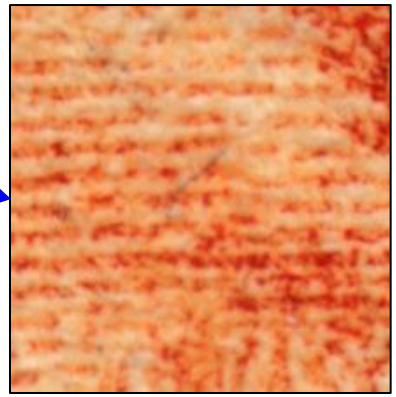
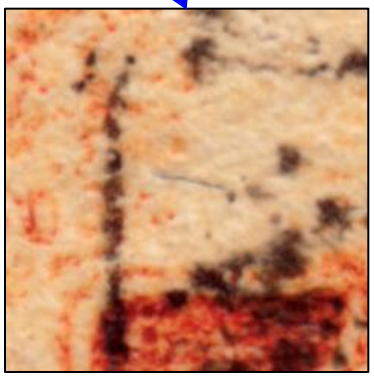
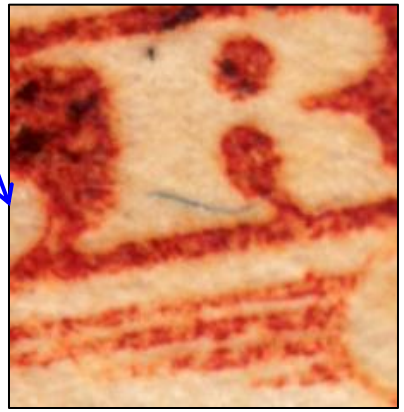
The Obverse Showing Embedded Short, Blue Silk Fibers









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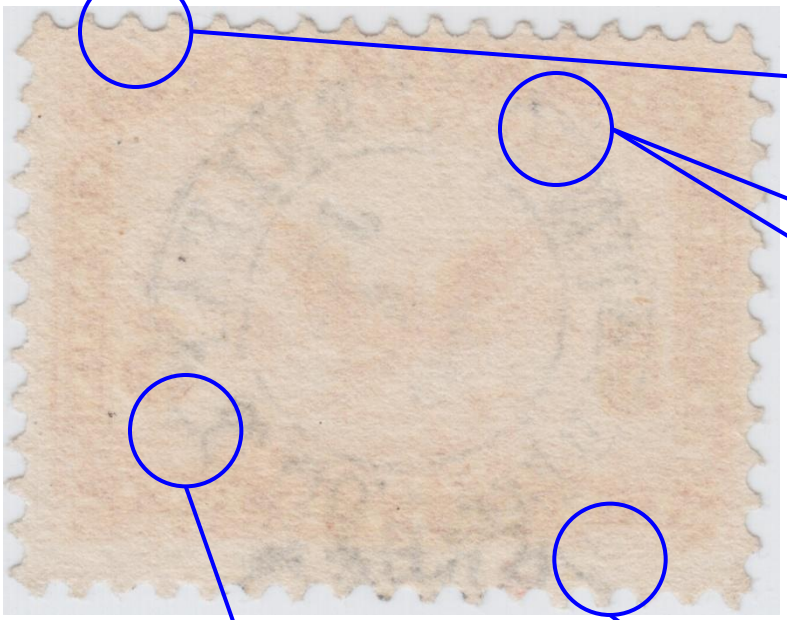
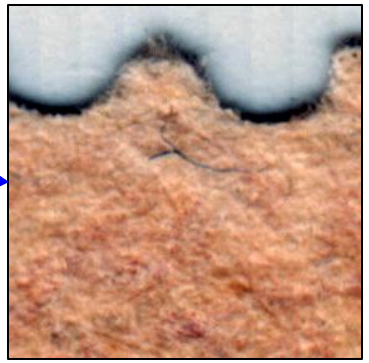
The Reverse Showing Embedded Short, Blue Silk Fibers





NOTE: To highlight the embedded short blue silk fibers, the cropped images had "Color Levels" adjusted in Photoshop.

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The 5¢ Orange RO102e on Experimental Silk Paper

SON 20 millimeter double-circle, black "GREENLEAF & CO. Milwaukee. JUL 4 187x" using www.RetroReveal.org

The 5¢ Orange RO102e Greenleaf & Co. backlit.
Experimental silk paper characteristics:

a. Thicker paper than old paper;
b. Printed image appears bolder than on old paper;
c. Whiter and more fibrous than old paper;
d. Contains a number of short, embedded blue and red silk fibers.

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