Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY September 6th at 7:00 pm Social Time from 6:30 pm onwards

Union Patriotic Civil War Covers

...presented by Stan Raugh

"Based on selected material from my collection, I will give examples of how many Northerners felt about the secessionist movement and it's leaders."

You will also see how Yankees expressed their patriotism, a glimpse of a viewpoint on slavery, and how religious beliefs framed their understanding of why the war happened.

Editor's Update:

The Future of Stamps??

This addition of Overprint features four articles, one pertains to France where the La Poste plans to issue it first digital stamp code. The second is from Great Britain where only definitive stamps with bar codes will be allowed in 2023 and the final two pertain to Cryptostamps. (What, you may ask? yeah me too! Ask your grandkids they may explain it to you). While this is just a beginning it is worrying that this may be the direction that Post Offices around the world might head towards. Our great grand kids may never see self-adhesive pieces of paper with pretty pictures on them. Everything will be done through a computer and if they do collect Crypto-stamps they will be stored in "the cloud" and only viewed via computer. Stamp Albums will be a thing of the past: or will they.?

Maybe, just maybe they will make what we now collect that much rarer and even more valuable, but not in our lifetime. Scary, but food for thought.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? LET ME KNOW.

Stamps Are Indeed Artifacts of Past Culture

By Stan Raugh, RSCC

Just as much as pottery, tools and weapons are artifacts of the past, so indeed are stamps.

It is easy to think of stamps as being recent arrivals on the scene and therefore don't tell us anything we don't already know.

The error in that second paragraph is not underestimating the age of stamps. The real error is in thinking we already know everything about recent times.

Tens of thousands of books have been written about the Civil War, and yet even major events are still in dispute. I belong to the Little Bighorn Associates and more books have been written about George Custer than any other American except Abraham Lincoln (and I think possible John F. Kennedy) and yet there is great debate about what point in the battle he was killed.

For that matter, who assassinated President Kennedy, or how many were involved, is still up in the air.

Unless some stamp collector buys a cover at a show with an enclosure that solves any of these mysteries we philatelists will never be of help. But a study of the stamps of a nation could make a major contribution to the understanding of the culture of a nation—possibly explaining why war or revolution happened.

After the Civil War the North gradually adopted a position that it was absolutely necessary to rebuild relations with the former Confederate States. In the early 1900's, stamps were issued depicting Southern leaders like Lee and Jackson.

A commemorative coin was issued promoting a Mount Rushmore-type sculpture of Southern leaders as well.

In today's political climate, do you think any stamp or coin issues like these would be permitted?

An extensive study could be made of all Southerners, political or popular, depicted on stamps and how reacceptance may have changed over the years as part of a sociological shift in public attitudes. That is, stamps as artifacts.

Stamp Happenings:

LANCASTER CLUB ZOOM MEETINGS: SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER Start Time: 6:30pm. Email me for the link

September 14th Postal History Research Resources by Steve Kennedy

September 28th Pure Adulteration by Ron Lesher

October 12th U.S. One-Half Cent Issues by Dave Hunt

October 26th My Grandfather was a Postmaster by Rick Barrett Also

BALPEX SHOW 2022 - Sept 2nd to 4th

presented by the Baltimore Philatelic Society at the Delta Baltimore Hunt Valley Inn, Hunt Valley MD

RSCC Treasurer's Report

Current Account as of 07/29/22: \$ 2,368.59

CD as of 12/31/21: \$ 3,174.14

News provided by Canada Post May 19, 2022, 09:00 ET

Donations from sales of special fundraising stamp will go to the Canada-Ukraine Foundation

OTTAWA, ON, May 19, 2022 /CNW/ - Recognizing the generosity of Canadians in times of need, Canada Post has issued a semi-postal fundraising stamp to provide customers and collectors with a way to support the people of Ukraine and the escalating humanitarian crisis.





@2022 Canada Post (CNW Group/Canada Post)

Photo caption (from left to right): Orest Sklierenko, President and CEO of the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, Major (Retired) Oksana Kuzyshyn, Chief Operating Officer at the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, and Doug Ettinger, President and CEO of Canada Post. Photo: Denis Drever (CNW Group/Canada Post)

About the stamp issue

The colorful stamp, originally issued in 2011, was designed and photographed by Isabelle Toussaint Design graphique, with the new booklet and first day of issue special envelope designed by Hélène L'Heureux. Printed by Lowe-Martin, this year's stamp issue includes a booklet of 10 PermanentTM domestic rate stamps and an Official First Day Cover cancelled in Ottawa.

"The need to support the people of Ukraine has never been greater as the unprovoked and indiscriminate attacks from Russia have led to catastrophic damage to infrastructure, killing of thousands of civilians including children, and millions of people displaced within and outside Ukraine," says Orest Sklierenko, President and CEO of the Canada-Ukraine Foundation, who met recently with Mr. Ettinger in Ottawa. "The toll has been devastating and we are grateful to Canada Post and to every Canadian who offers support."

A donation of \$1 from each booklet of 10 stamps (and 10 cents from the Official First Day Cover, a special collectible envelope) will provide essential aid – and hope – to those affected by the situation. Funds raised through the purchase of this stamp will be distributed through the Canada-Ukraine Foundation. This is the first time that Canada Post has issued a stamp in support of a country in need of humanitarian assistance. The stamps are available for pre-order at **canadapost.ca** from today and will be available for purchase in post offices starting July 7.

Today, nearly four per cent of Canadians can trace their roots to Ukraine. The sunflower is Ukraine's national flower and has now become a widely recognized symbol of peace and unity. The yellow sunflower and blue-sky background reflect the colors of Ukraine's flag. Sunflowers also adorn the *vinok*, Ukraine's traditional floral headdress.

AND NOW TO THE FUTURE OF STAMPS

FIRST FRANCE

'Digital Stamps' coming soon from La Poste



France's La Poste has announced it will issue "digital stamps" starting in 2023.

The initiative will offer a "very simple" alternative to the green Marianne definitive stamps currently used in France for low-weight mail, according to La Poste director general Nathalie Collin.

To send mail with a digital "stamp," users will pay to download a single-use eight-character code – a mix of letters and numbers – which they can then write by hand in the top-right corner of an envelope or postcard. The code will serve as a stamp and confirm the sender's payment for a price of €1.16, the same as the green Marianne definitive.

The move comes as La Poste modernizes its business amid the ongoing decline in regular mail, which dropped from 18 billion letters in 2012 to six billion letters in France in 2022.

La Poste plans to invest €800 million by 2025 to accompany its modernization plans, which include assisting the estimated 13 million people in France who may have difficulty with digital technology. To create the digital code system, a dozen researchers developed a "complex" algorithm to reduce fraudulent activity, Collin said.

Despite its push to the future, La Poste has no plans to forgo traditional paper stamps, including its definitive series featuring Marianne, the personification of the French Republic, that began in 2005.

AND TO GREAT BRITAIN

Reinventing stamps for the next generations

Royal Mail stamps are changing, so what should you do with your old stamps?

The Royal Mail delivered more than 20 billion letters in 2005 but fewer than eight billion in 2020-

We're adding barcodes to all our regular 'everyday' stamps. These are the stamps (pictured below) that will be very familiar to you. They feature the profile of Her Majesty the Queen on a plain colored background. The barcodes will enable exciting new services by connecting physical stamps to the digital world through the Royal Mail app which you can download here.



We're giving you plenty of notice about this change and any non-barcoded stamps you have will still be valid until 31 January 2023. If you won't be able to use all of your stamps by that date you can swap them out for new barcoded ones.

How to get a 'Stamp Swap Out' form

• If you have a printer, you can swap out up to £200 worth of non-barcoded stamps by printing out and completing this Stamp Swap Out PDFOpens in a new windowpdf, 200.52 KB. You can send this back to us free of charge, along with your stamps, by writing on the envelope Freepost SWAP OUT. No other address details or postcode are needed.

"Eventually it will just be the barcode, won't it?" Dinah Johnson, the founder of the U.K.-based Handwritten Letter Appreciation Society, told the *Guardian* this July. "They're trying to attract the younger generation by throwing in a QR code and a video of Shaun the Sheep," U.K. collector and dealer Andrew Jackson also told the *Guardian*,

ONWARDS TO CRYPTO-STAMPS

. A Short-Illustrated History of Crypto-stamps

- February 4, 2021 ~ Philately. Lately. This article comes from Austria
- First off, is it *cryptostamp*, or *crpyto-stamp*? Its novelty effect for me is showcased perfectly by the fact it's often written with a hyphen. Remember the time we were writing e-mail instead of email? All newly coined words come out as hybrids and its only speaker community acceptance that gives the verdict, whether the coinage will stay with us as a linguistic stamp, or will replace completely the trite *stamp*, or will vanish forever and not be remembered by anyone.
- What is a crypto-stamp after all? A crypto-stamp is a stamp with a fancy design, loads of security elements, virtual currency trading options, and to top it all, with a twin virtual stamp associated to it through a secure connection.
- **Fancy design**: for sure, as you will see below, crypto-stamp design is inclusive of all high-tech offset printing findings. There are film printings, inlays, engravings, biodegradable latex scratch-cards, credit-card shaped plastic bases, cutoffs, you name it. Packaging comes as an extra some come in sleek holders and presentation packs.



Pictured above an Austrian crypto-stamp. It is sold in a plastic holder similar to credit card holders and a carton presentation pack.

- Security elements: oftentimes QR codes, hidden keyword or codes under latex scratch cards, peel-offs, tamper seals. You can definitely know whether your item was used or not by simply checking all the security elements. In addition, redeeming your virtual stamp means you have to be more on the techsavvy side and understand smart contracts, Ethereum blockchains, security protocols, and virtual currency trading.
- The security elements give a total new dimension to stamps being mint: from the moment even the seal has been tampered with, not to mention something being scratched or peeled off, they are no longer mint, but in a limbo between 'new' and potentially 'used'.



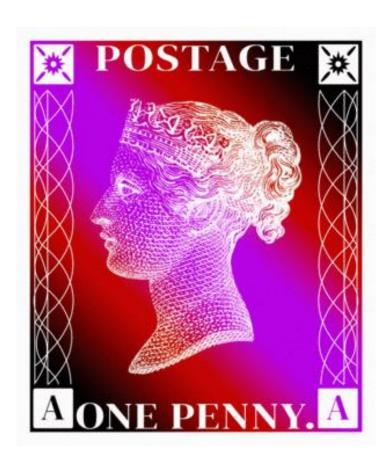
- Pictured above two holders of cryptos tamps with different seal states: (A) original, not tampered with; (B) tampered with, where the word *geöffnet* (German for *open*) is visible.
- **Virtual currency trading options**: the stamps are issued in a quite steep pricing in local currency but some have bitcoin value. For sure, it was only a matter of time until bitcoin-priced stamps were truly bound to happen. It was also unavoidable for stamp world not to include at a certain point in time gamification experiences. Because yes, you can *claim*, *achieve*, *trade*, or *take over* crypto-stamps, so buckle up and be a good sport! And there's a *prize* in it at the end, as the pricing is relative to the number and security elements of the stamp you purchased, incrementally going to a lot more than you invest in a stamp. To give you an example: the first-ever crypto-stamp issued by Austria has a face value of 6.9EUR. In catalogue value terms (Michel catalog no: 3470) it's now priced 120EUR in mint. In its virtual value, at first activation its value is 0.00166 ETH (a little less than 0.5EUR at the time of writing this article) but through tradeoffs it can incrementally get to as much as 13,000EUR!

• **Twin stamps**: when you buy a crypto-stamp, you don't buy just the physical copy of the stamp, but a twin virtual stamp that you can add to a wallet, or personal virtual collection. And now that's the moment stamp collectors dread the most: our beautiful, flimsy, ephemeral stamps we hold so dear got to the cloud. The twin stamps may or may not resemble the physical copy, or may present several varieties of color and design. Which means, after all, that buying just one copy of the virtual stamp does not get you the full deck of varieties – you'd have to buy potentially hundreds of crypto-stamps to complete your collection of virtual varieties.

AND LOOK WHAT THEY HAVE DONE TO THE PENNY BLACK

The Project: The Crypto Penny Black

- The project took its cue from the first and historic Penny Black stamp.
- We have imagined a black and white past in color; therefore 12 different types of hand-made stamps were born, with contrasting, eye-catching, and bright colors. The end result is a hybrid of past and present, history and digital art.
- With the Crypto Penny Black project, we want to revolutionize the way NFTs (nonfungible tokens) are collected, shifting the focus from the absolute rarity of the individual Nft to the relative rarity, of the collection, as in the analog system of stamp collecting.



The project digitally recreated the historic First Postage Stamp, the iconic 1840 Penny Black, the pioneer of the postal revolution.

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• In a recent auction of what may be considered the earliest known example of the Penny Black, Sotheby's auction house writes: "It is one of the most important inventions in the history of mankind, a precursor to global mass communications."

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- The individual Crypto Penny was made entirely by hand, one by one, divided into 12 different types, with contrasting, eye-catching, and bright colors, for a total of 3224 pieces.
- The end result is a hybrid of past and present, history and digital art.
- The creation process followed the history of the original Penny Black: the individual NFT bears letters indicating its relative position in the Plate, divided into 12 columns by 10 rows.
- The number of Crypto Penny of the 12 types proportionally follows the number of stamps originally printed, for example, Plate #01A has 240 copies and Plate #11 only 8 copies.
- With the Crypto Penny Black project, we want to revolutionize the way NFTs are collected, shifting the focus from the absolute rarity of the individual Nft to the relative rarity, of the collection, as in the analog stamp collecting system.
- "This is an inherent concept in collecting, which is a human activity and as such easily transferable from analog to digital, we think it will soon emerge naturally and inescapably."



IS THIS WHAT WE HAVE TO LOOK FORWARD TO?

I LIKE HOT AIR BALLOONING AND I RECENTLY FOUND THIS ISSUE:

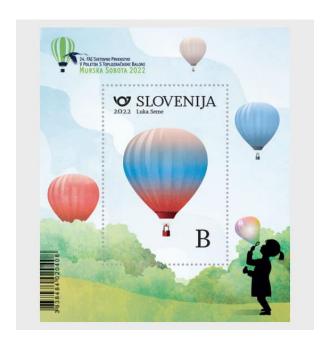
World Hot Air Balloon Championship – Slovenia 2022

Date: July 15, 2022 Author: stampdigest 0 Comments

World Hot Air Balloon Championship – Slovenia 2022

Between 16 and 23 September, the World Hot Air Ballooning Championships took place in Murska Sobota. The organizers of the World Championship in Muska Sobota are the ROTO Balloon Club, the Municipality of Murska Sobota, the Aviation Association of Slovenia and the Aeroclub Murska Sobota.

At the initiative of the Philatelic Association of Slovenia, the event was also marked by Pošta Slovenije, which issued a commemorative stamp with the motif of hot air balloons in honor of the World Cup. The issue was issued on July 11, 2022. FDC is listed



Royal Mail Issue #Transformers Special Stamps That Are 'More Than Meets The Eye'

August 16, 2022 From Action Figure Insider. Written by Daniel Picket AFI founder and Editor-In-Chief



Royal Mail announce the launch of a set of 13 Special Stamps being issued to celebrate the British contribution to the globally successful, Transformers, animated franchise from Hasbro, Inc., a global play and entertainment company. The main set of eight stamp designs, are produced in pairs and feature original illustrations of Transformers Autobots and Deceptions locked in a battle, in retro Generation 1 style from the 1980s.

Featured on the stamps are: Optimus Prime; Megatron; Bumblebee; Starscream; Grimlock; Shockwave; Arcee; and Soundwave.

The images were created exclusively for Royal Mail by three established, British comic artists: Andrew Wildman (pencils); Stephen Baskerville (inks); and John-Paul Bove (colors) – who have all contributed to Transformer's comic series

The main eight stamps are printed with a hidden ink which reveals each of the character's faction logos and names in the Cybertronian alphabet when shone under UV light.

In addition, fans who download the Royal Mail App, can scan the stamp, and watch a unique Augmented Reality animation including a clip from the original animated Transformers TV series.



Matt Parkes, Director of Stamps and Collectibles, Royal Mail, said: 'Since *The Transformers* burst onto the scene in 1984, British writers and artists have made a substantial contribution to the ongoing story of the popular warring mechanoids; to this day many continue to do so and have inspired new artists to do the same. We are delighted to be able to celebrate their work with this stunning set of stamps – which calls back not only to the early comics but also – by using the Royal Mail App to trigger hidden content – the original cartoon series as well!"

Transformers robots—alien sentient beings who can change into vehicles, machinery and more — first appeared in toy shops and on TV screens in 1984. Nearly 40 years on, thanks to the addition of comic books, computer games and movies, the likes of Optimus Prime and Megatron have become pop-culture titans.

The story of the heroic Autobots and the evil Decepticons has been told in many different ways, but the core premise is usually the same: a deadly civil war engulfs the distant metal planet of Cybertron and eventually spreads to Earth. Key to the warring mechanoids' success in the UK and Ireland was Marvel UK's *The Transformers* comic, which told an epic seven-year story across 332 issues.

As well as launching the careers of British writers and artists, such as Simon Furman, Geoff Senior and Andrew Wildman, 'TFUK' inspired fans to follow in their footsteps – with James Roberts, Nick Roche and Jack Lawrence continuing to expand the mythos, establish the definitive origin of the Transformers robots and reinvent the robots in disguise for the 21st century with characters and concepts that endure to this day.

The stamps are available to pre-order now at www.royalmail.com/transformers and by phone on 03457 641 641. The stamps go on general sale on 1 September, with the Presentation Pack, containing all 13 stamps, priced at £17.50.

AND FINALY FROM MEKEEL'S: A REPRINT (August 2022) OF A REPRINT (November 2018) OF A REPRINT (July 1946) and it just happens to fit with this month's presentation

Yesterday in Mekeel's:

The Civil War and Philately

by Ernest S. Craighead (From Mekeel's Weekly, July 22, 1946, with images added)

The great effort put forth as a nation in the First and Second World Wars has led many people to think that the Civil War was small in the face of these later conflicts-in fact a horse and buggy and candle-light affair. Each reader can make his own comparisons so only a few figures will be presented here. The Civil War population of the Northern States was some twenty-two and a half million from which one million seven hundred thousand soldiers were enlisted or approximately one-twelfth of the population. Conservative historians estimate the loss of the North at five hundred thousand and if that figure is accepted then about one out of every three soldiers engaged on the side of the North was slain. Practically every able bodied man in the Southern States served in the Confederate Army and altogether, North and South combined the Nation lost nearly a million men killed, the flower of young American manhood, and this out of a population hardly one-third that of 1940.

Unnumbered readers of Mekeel's are sons, grandsons or great-grandsons of Northern and Southern soldiers-in fact, many still living have clear recollections of the time when the great conflict seemed very near. The Civil War was costly not only in lives but in treasure and required every effort of the civilian population to sustain the armies in the field. This necessity for funds taxed the ingenuity of the Governments, both Federal and Confederate, resulting in a multitude of devices, the mementoes of which are so prized today by collectors of postage and revenue stamps, paper money and American generally. One of the fiscal features of the Civil War was an income tax, the amount of income returned by every tax payer being published in the daily papers. The Civil War, like our later Wars, was partially financed by bond issues, but one great difference was the rate of interest which ran as high as 7% on some issues.

In presenting a brief review of the philatelic items born in the fiery furnace of the great Civil conflict it must be

born in mind that the size of the subject forbids touching any but the high spots. Any one item alone offers material for a lengthy ar-

h e outbreak of the Civil War found large stocks of United States postage stamps in the hands of Southern



The demonetized 1857 issue used in combination with the 1861 issue that replaced it: 1857 3¢ upper right (Sc. 26) tied by "Chicago Ill. Oct. 22" double-circle datestamp and duplex grid on cover to Detroit with printed corner card, blue "OLD STAMPS / Not Recognized" two-line handstamp and matching "Held for Postage" oval, also with 3¢ 1861 (Sc. 65) tied by "Chicago Ill. Oct. 23" doublecircle datestamp and duplex grid.



postmasters. To take care of this situation the Federal Government demonetized all outstanding issues and on August 15th, 1861 a new series was placed on sale, produced by the National Bank Note Company and consisting of 1, 3, 5, 10, 12, 24, 30 and 90 cent denominations all with numerals in upper corners and "U" "S" in lower.

The Act of 1863 reduced letpostage to the uniform rate of

> three cents and raised the local rate to two cents, resulting in the handsome 'big face' Jackson two cent black, familiarly known as the "Black Jack" placed on sale July 1, 1863.

President Lincoln was as-



No.31 Sc. 73 in a plate block of 8

sassinated on April 14, 1865 (just as the Civil War was ending) and to honor the martyred President his portrait in black was used on the first fifteen cent stamp, issued for use upon the introduction of the new registration fee in 1866. This stamp is generally considered as the first United States commemorative. Other Presidents similarly honored by mourning stamps have been Garfield (brown color) and McKinley, Harding and Wilson in black.



Sc. EP1, 1¢ encased postage issued by the Aerated Bread Co.

Due to the scarcity of small coins with which to make change, many private firms resorted to a novel form of advertising by "encasing" these postage stamps in metal frames with a mica front, placing

their names on the back in embossed letters. Small copper "tokens" with a value of one cent were extensively issued by private firms and to take care of this pressing necessity for change the Government issued "Postage Currency" under the Act of July 17, 1862.

The First General Issue August 21, 1862 to May 27, 1863 had on each note a facsimile of the postage stamp then current: on the five cent denomination, one Jefferson five cent stamp in



Front and back of Sc. PC7, the 1862 25¢ Postage Currency with 5 x 5¢ stamp facsimiles.

brown; on the ten cent denomination, one ten cent Washington stamp in green and on the twenty-five and fifty cent denomination the five cent and ten cent stamps are drawn over-lapping



each other, five in a row, respectively, brown for the twentyfive cent and green for the fifty-cent. A set of the four postage currency notes in crisp new condition can be purchased perforated for about \$22 and imperforate for about \$6 [Scott 2018 lists the total of the first four "in crisp new condition", Sc. PC1-PC4 at \$915]. Altogether, five general issues of fractional currency (shinplasters) were produced, comprising some thirty-seven major varieties and some seventy-eight major and minor varieties in denominations of 3, 5, 10, 15, 25, 50 cents. A collection of Civil War Postage Currency and Fractional Currency is very beautiful and fascinating. The Confederate States also issued a profusion of paper money the collection of which makes an interesting sideline.

Although the main varieties of Confederate postage stamps are not too numerous, their collection is a specialty in itself and one requiring a rather deep pocket book.



Memphis 5¢ Provisional, Sc. 56X2; and a Magnus Patriotic Camp Scene design with the 3¢ Sc. 65 stamp tied by a fancy cancel. See next column for two additional examples.

and with postage stamps and post-marks affixed they rank high as philatelic curiosities.

The envelope stamps of the Civil War period consist of the series of 1861, distinguished by outline letters and with the higher denominations from 12 to 40 cents bicolored (rare and high priced).

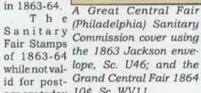


1861 24¢ corner, Sc. U44



Union side-turn it upside down and it pictures a jackass; and a 'Hanging Lincoln' cover from the Confederate side.

this series the two cent black profile of Jackson, with the curious topknot, resembling an Indian headdress and issued in 1863-64.



age are today 10¢, Sc. WV11

very rare. In our generation the Red Cross performs on battlefield and in hospital many of the functions inaugurated in the Civil War with funds raised by the Sanitary Fairs.







Left to right: 1862 First Issue proof, Sc. R1P4; r1871 Second Issue 20¢, in this case with the black center inverted, Sc. R111a; 1872 Third Issue \$20, Sc. R150.

As far as the Northern States are concerned, Revenue Stamps played a conspicuous part in financing the Civil War and continued in use for seventeen years after the War ended, or until 1882. The First Issue, from 1862 until 1871, both imperforated and perforated were followed by the Second Issue in 1871 in which the vignettes are blue with a black medallion (Stuart's) portrait of Washington. The Third Issue

used the same plates as the Second but with the vignettes in various colors. (Front cover, the 1872 Third Issue 1¢ Proof in a Plate Block of 8, Sc. R134P4). It would seem as though the engravers' art reached a pinnacle of excellence in the production of these Civil War revenue stamps that has never been equalled since. A beautiful collection can still be formed for a moderate outlay.

Although not generally collected, "Revenue Stamped Paper" presents a fascinating field for the collector of Civil War items with some twenty-three different types or dies and innumerable colors denominations and varieties. These stamps are imprinted on checks and other documents and should be collected on the whole document, never clipped. In use for twenty years, many are not at all rare and a beautiful, but not complete collection can be acquired at modest cost.



Revenue Stamped Paper: 2¢ Orange J Die, Sc. RN-J11, on 187_Commercial National Bank of Pa. check printed on violet laid paper. Printed by Wm. F. Murphy's Sons, Philadelphia.

"Private Proprietary" Match, Medicine, Perfumery and Playing Card stamps complete this review of Civil War philatelic items. These stamps performed a double duty: paying the revenue tax to the Government and



The state of the s

Left: San Francisco Match Co. on silk paper, Sc. RO165; right, Hunt's Remedy Medicine stamp, Sc. RS56

serving to advertise the firms that issued them. Many of these can still be had for a few cents each



and no Civil
War collection can be
considered
complete
without
a representative
showing.



Left: Baird's Bloom of Youth Perfumery stamp on pink paper, Sc. RT14c; right, Goodall Playing Cards stamp on old paper, Sc. RU8a

November 2018

U.S. Stamp